

# SEVEN DAYS

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August 30, 1975–December 26, 2013

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semi-professional photographer, went to every single library to gather the information. She still has requests for copies of the book.

**Lon Bellinger**  
BOSTON

#### IN THE DRINK

Thanks for picking my two favorite libations in 2013 ("The Year in Liquids," December 25). I stumbled into Soto Rooster, lured by the bar's very soto-rooster name, on its opening night and of course ordered the smoked Negroni. I wanted to cry; it was so perfect: the copper cup (Is it really copper? WTF!), the big, very top ice cube, the strong, leathery stain, the delicate, fruity finish. I just had another one on New Year's Eve. It will make you snifle — trust me. If it doesn't, the responsible bar staff will find the perfect thing for you — just ask.

And Edouard's sparkling dry cider? Of course, I am biased as I do work at the MEK Tasting Center in Newport, but truly it was the best I tasted in Vermont this year — even better than my own several homebrewed ciders. You guys have great taste!

**Kalista Yarmoukos**  
DARTMOUTH

#### VICIOUS CIRCLE?

I enjoyed your article about Winoski Circle Arts and wanted to update you on their situation ("A Winoski Pop-Up Art Market Rides In to Stay," December 18). It was just there the other day and was told they are getting locked out of the building on January 15. Seems that the out-of-state landlord wants a lot more rent than they can afford and basically told them to leave out ASAP. Worst of all, there really isn't anywhere for them to go and very little time to find something. So Winoski Circle Arts is not settled in to stay after all — yet another casualty of greedy development in Vermont. Sad.

**David Cooper**  
BURLINGTON

Editor's note: WCA, no longer Live Conventville, is the contrary, that a new location is very likely — and in Winoski. At or prior time they're waiting to hear where that will be.

#### LEAHY'S F-35 SPIN MACHINE

The "Plane and Not So Simple: Who Spent How Much Arguing For and Against the F-35?" (December 13). On December 4, 2013, following the F-35

decision announcement, the backslapping between Sen. Leahy and his supporters had barely stopped when the spin machine started up.

The first year spin was Leahy's comment that he had spoken with "dozens and dozens and dozens" of F-35 opponents. One of the most shameful aspects of the leasing decision process was Leahy's refusal to meet personally with those who would be impacted, in a demolition of his responsibilities to Vermonters, despite the United States Air Force's dire predictions of harm to residential neighborhoods. So it comes as a total surprise to me and many others opposed to the leasing decision that he has met with "dozens" of us. (Leahy's office refused a request to confirm names and dates of those meetings.)

The next spin was when Leahy spoke of the proponents' "grassroots campaign." But as Kevin Kelly's reporting revealed, there were huge donations of dollars and great political and business pressure exerted through some of the most powerful private and nonprofit organizations in the state, including the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation. These business interests applied enormous influence to minimize, distort and turn the public's attention away from the environmental damages from the F-35 that have been predicted by the USAF.

Grassroots means "pertaining to the common people, especially in contrasted with the elite." Surely the pre-F-35 crusade that was brought, paid for and delivered by the corporate and political interests in our state don't deserve such a title.

**Eileen Andrew**  
WINOSKI

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# the MAGNIFICENT

# 7

MUST SEE, MUST DO THIS WEEK

COMPILED BY COURTNEY COFF

FRIDAY 10

## KEEPING THE BEAT ①

When it comes to instruments, the drummers of **Recycled Percussion** aren't picky. Using objects ranging from industrial junk and power tools to bubble ts and metal cans, the nationally recognized group creates a unique musical experience. Known for live shows that meld demanding physical performances with awe-inspiring props and visuals, the troupe also delivers a big sound.

SEE CALDWELL LISTING ON PAGE 48

②

THURSDAY 09- SUNDAY 12

## Packing Heat

Let's face it: the recent cold snap has put even the most die-hard commuters to the test. At the plenty of winter odds to come, the **Spice on Snow** folk musical festival returns up Cleveland Heights with a selection of Cape residents. Authentic acts complement performances by famed musicians including the Beatles, Teddie Bruce Holiday and others.

SEE STORY ON PAGE 36.  
SPOTLIGHT ON PAGE 48  
SEE CALDWELL LISTING ON PAGE 48

③

SATURDAY 11 &amp; SUNDAY 12

## Pawstively Good Time

Passionate about Pawsies? Head for Marine Corps' Head to the **Warrent Fancy Feet Cat Show**, where purrfectly primped pussies vie for winners and kittens compete for love. Amid all the action, dedicated owners — many of whom travel the national competition circuit — offer a glimpse into the world with the Parade of Pawsies.

SEE CALDWELL LISTING ON PAGE 48

④

## UNGOING In Sight

For **Tara Bartram**, time involves a time and a space. The accomplished photographer and author combines his passions with images of the Harwell, Kentucky local population. On view at the Harwell Institute of Natural Science, his work reflects the idea of "capturing" an entire life's sparkling scope on a digital camera and facilitates capturing intricate details from great distances.

SEE PHOTOGRAPHY ON PAGE 48

⑤

SATURDAY 11

## Trail Mix

The **Yoop Family Lodge Nordic Center** takes its name at the region's most pristine cross-country skiing — including the homecoming route up to Sixteen Feet and Cabin. Constructed in 1971, the structure serves as a refuge for winter athletes and the perfect for the **Yoop: Back to the Cabin**, where competitors strap on their skis for a ski showdown.

SEE CALDWELL LISTING ON PAGE 48

⑥

SUNDAY 12

## All Keyed Up

The **Western Chime** choir likes the playing of played **John Adams** in the heart of a high school. The internationally acclaimed award-winning professional vocalists from Middlebury College debut with a program of American and works by David and Rachmaninoff, performed at the school's recently opened **Barney** concert grand piano.

SEE CALDWELL LISTING ON PAGE 48

⑦

FRIDAY 12 &amp; SATURDAY 11

## Culture Clash

Little is known about **2010's** indigenous African people who are struggling to preserve their next large intercommunity society. In **Free Africa**, a **Myth of the African** (documentary) features some of the most beautiful and beautiful African people in the world, as they strive to bring children to life and preserve their culture. The film is a cultural and social

SEE CALDWELL LISTING ON PAGE 48



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## Statehouse Rules

**A**s soon as they arrived in Montpelier Tuesday, Vermont legislators sought to open the budget to more money on politics.

A mere two hours after House Speaker **DAVE CAMPBELL**, provided in the 2005 legislative session House and Senate negotiators signed off on a long-sought agreement to reform the state's campaign finance system.

Only problem is the proposed "reform" would actually increase the amount of money many political actors could raise. (It's so vested down from earlier proposals that the Vermont Public Interest Research Group, which has spent years fighting for such a bill, has already vowed to oppose it.) "It just cannot be described accurately as campaign-finance reform any longer," said **VERMONT** Executive Director **PAUL LAMORE**. "It increases the amount of money in politics in this state, and it doesn't do enough to increase transparency that voters have a right to."

The legislation would double from \$2,000 to \$4,000 the amount that statewide candidates and political-action committees could raise from individuals, corporations and PACs. And it would guarantee to \$20,000 the amount political parties could raise from each of those entities.

Because parties will be permitted to transfer an unlimited amount of money to candidates, donors could easily circumvent even those higher limits by legally funneling money through a party.

So why are contribution limits going up — not down?

The cost of campaigning continues to rise, argues Rep. **DAVID DUNN** (D-East Junction), one of six negotiators who logged the compromise between competing House and Senate versions that passed last spring. Their plan could pass the full House and Senate later this week.

"We did actually have some input from statewide candidates, and they felt that they could probably use more money," Dunn said, declining to name names.

No doubt they did. Of the 56 individuals and corporations donating to Gov. **PETER SHANAHAN**'s reelection campaign in the first six months of last year, 39 of them hit the existing \$2,000 limit. And that was just a quarter of the way through the two-year election cycle.

Not all contribution caps would increase after agreement was reached last June. House candidates would be limited to donations of just \$5,000, while senators would be limited to \$5,000. But currently can raise \$20,000. The bill also would more frequent fundraising reports, though candidates still

only have to file once in two-election years. And a provision aimed at Burlington-based **UNIVERSITY** donors, who donated more than a million dollars to a conservative PAC in 2002, would require such groups to identify big-dollar donors to subcommittees that legislators scrapped other reforms. And a proposed ban on corporate donations. And the insurance of House negotiators, it declared to require donors to disclose their occupations and employers.

## SO WHY ARE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION LIMITS GOING UP — NOT DOWN?

"We come from small, rural communities. I mean, you're going to be able to identify that person," explained Rep. **WENDY MARRAS** (D-Walton), who served on the conference committee. "What does it accomplish?"

"What's the real game there?" Dunn asked. "We just thought it wasn't necessary."

Why would the public want to know which companies and industries are pouring up to political campaigns?

Um, I can think of a few reasons.

**LAMORE'S List**

"Vermont has a problem: keeping our elected officials accountable."

Those words looked odd on a Campaign for Vermont founder **BRIAN LAMORE** played for reporters last Thursday at a Montpelier television studio. There he seemed a state of reform he said would clean up state government.

Among his recommendations? A new code of ethics governing state officials and a quasi-judicial ethics commission to enforce that compliance. New candid-at-interest rules for legislators and personal financial disclosures for statewide officials. Also a "revolving door" ban that would keep ex-officials from lobbying their former colleagues for up to two years.

"Tonight, in almost all cases, ethics problems," said Lamore, a former Wall Street executive.

But which problems, precisely, was the *Shanahan* president hoping to address? Oddly, he wouldn't quite say. Throughout his hour-long presentation, Lamore declined to state a single conflict or ethics breach.

But the four-minute video he played included some screen grab whizzes. It was a virtual highlights reel of last summer's news coverage of a controversial land deal

between Gov. **Peter Shanahan** and an East Montpelier neighbor.

Asked if he was implying that Shanahan used unethical means to buy his neighbor's house on the cheap, the grand Lameau, who has spent more than a million dollars bunting his own image with television and radio advertisements, dismissed.

"The source is I don't know," he said innocently. "I don't know that anything was ever proven."

That said, Lamore helpfully noted that if his proposed ethics commission had been in place, the gov "might have checked in beforehand and said, 'What do you think?'"

Told about Lamore's proposal, state pols didn't exactly jump for joy. Many — Democrats and Republicans alike — view Lamore's entry either as a threat to be rebuffed or a ploy to be ignored.

"I don't know why this is needed," said Sen. **JOHN MARRAS** (D-Grand Isle), a behind-the-scenes power broker. "I think we're trying to address a problem that isn't there."

But **BRIAN LAMORE**, managing editor for the Center for Public Integrity, said it differently. In 2002, the nonpartisan investigative reporting organization gave Vermont a D+ on its "Corruption Risk Report Card." The state lapsed because it's one of only three in the country with neither commission or personal financial disclosure rules.

"To fix from places like Vermont and the Dakota like to state the idea that, 'We haven't had any big corruption scandals,'" Whelan said. "It's like, 'We're better than some other states, stand up. Of course, not. You have more of the system that would force out influence or corruption.'"

And despite Lamore's reluctance to cite specifics, there's never any shortage of eyebrow-raising moves in and out of Vermont state government.

Take, for instance, **BARRY MARSHALL**, Shanahan's former telecom czar, who decamped from the administration last year to take a job with the Vermont Telephone Company — just weeks after leaving to succeed a state grant to VTDC.

Or former House Majority Leader **LESLIE LAMORE**, who resigned her seat in June 2002 to take a job with Green Mountain Power, only to be named deputy secretary of commerce six months later.

Or **WENDY MARRAS**, who signed up to lobby for the Vermont State Employees Association immediately after concluding his 12-year run in the Senate.

Of course, some state legislators have no need for the revolving door, since they already work for companies or industry groups that heavily lobby the state.

Rep. **JOHN D'AMICO**, who's been a day job as Vermont director of public

affairs for Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, no longer serves as the organization's registered lobbyist. But she remains the go-to guy who does **WOLKOFFER**.

While Krawcheck says she hasn't received herself from any vote after "vacation" to avoid conflicts between her two jobs.

"I'm not worried, I'm never doing legislative stuff and when I'm at the legislature, I'm very clear about what I'm not seeing," she said.

Rep. **BOB SMITH** (D-St. Johnsbury), who took a job last May as an associate for the NRMA, says he would recuse himself "in a heartbeat" if his union's legislative promises come before him.

"But everybody needs a job, and in my world to make a full-time legislative body where you don't have your head," he said.

Speaker Smith says he's not interested in having his members' employment options, but he concedes that the legislature "could improve our conflict-of-interest policy." While both the House and Senate have a one-voice rule barring legislators from voting on any issue in which they are "immediately or directly interested," Smith calls it an "honorary system" that is infrequently invoked.

"I think people probably need to more fully disclose the benefits they're on and their employment situation so that the general public has some of whether there might be some conflict of interest," he said.

Not every potential conflict is cut and dry.

Sen. **DAVID ZACKERMAN** (D-D. Chittenden), for instance, recently introduced legislation that would provide a tax credit to those who donate to "socially responsible, small firms." He says the bill would create jobs by helping farmers invest in new capital projects.

But Zackerman considers that his own Wall Moon Farm in Winooski would qualify for the program, so long as he provided more sick days to his employees. So is he pushing the proposal to boost his own bottom line?

"I don't know that it would any yes or no to that question," he said. "I would say any experience just sort of influenced this opportunity — and I think it's an untapped opportunity — be it for me or any number of farmers."

Like many, Zackerman argues that Vermonters benefit from a "broad diversity of professional experience" in the legislature.

According to Rep. **KEVIN MIA** (D-Jericho), a medical doctor who serves on the House Committee on Health Care, "When you don't have any staff or anything like that, having outside expertise is really critical to the process. Otherwise, you're really completely torn in favor to the lobbyists to be the only experts."

Like Speaker Smith, Zackerman says he would support new rules to better disclose conflicts, but he's less concerned in Leman's

proposal to require statewide officers to disclose their personal finances, as state attorneys do.

"It's about what each of us earns every year, that's getting a little bit personal, I think, and beyond where's necessary," he says.

Shankin said he'd scarcely go further than Leman in arguing that "all elected officials serving in Montpelier" — including legislators — disclose their finances.

"Having the same rules in place for those who make laws and are elected to carry them out makes sense to me," said Shankin spokeswoman **ROSALIND**, adding that he'd remain open-minded.

Perhaps the gay nations there isn't so way legislators will force themselves to disclose their finances.

As for Leman, Mr. Transparency isn't about to open up his books for the masses, even though his million-dollar advocacy machine is surely more influential than most legislators.

Asked if he'd disclose his finances, Leman said, "If I ran for office, I would sure. And so would you. But [I'm] just sitting at a table talking about it today."

#### Following the Money

Speaking of covering donors, now-former deputy commissioner of labor **ANNE HOLIFIELD** ended her second tour of duty at state government last week to begin her third tour of duty as Shankin's campaign fundraiser.

Wolff, who served as the gov's finance director during his 2003 and 2012 races, moonlighted as his fundraiser last fall, even as she held down her government job. Shankin told *Seven Days* last month that his no-letting campaign had yet to start up, but that he had "been having discussions with her about the future."

Obviously those discussions went well. "Inside the decision to pursue fundraising and consulting," Wolff said the work in an email. "I have several clients including Shankin for Governor, raising money as I have done in the past, and a part-time fundraising contract with the Democratic Governor Association."

Shankin serves as chairman of the DGA, a partisan political organization dedicated to electing Democratic governors. That group, which does not have to abide by fundraising restrictions, regularly raises via email and other ways contributions from corporations and labor unions. It then funnels the money back to vulnerable gubernatorial candidates.

Now's Wolff going to negotiate working for both organizations? And could any conflicts emerge if Shankin for Governor's top fundraiser is also raising unlimited contributions on his behalf at the DGA?

Wolff told *Seven Days* he neither spokesman for the governor, nor for the DGA, agreed to comment. ☐

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# Violent Odyssey: Kidnapping Victim Speaks for First Time About Terrifying Road Trip

BY MARK DAVIS

**S**ure Rodman lay in the parking lot of a St. Johnsbury shopping center, blood gushing from bullet holes in his stomach and leg. Rodman had made a daring attempt to grab the .38-caliber pistol away from the man who was aiming it at him, but succeeded only in knocking the black male off the marth bar.

And now the shooter — whom Rodman recognized as Oscar Rodriguez, his girlfriend's estranged husband — was ordering Rodman into the trunk of his beat-up Chevy Blazer.

With his wounds, Rodman didn't think he could stand up, let alone fend himself from a trunk, he later recalled. Plus, he thought, happening into the trunk of his car never went well for people in the movies. And even if he were willing, there was no room. The trunk was full of papers and an old air conditioner he had been meaning to get rid of.

"Are you kidding me?" Rodman asked Rodriguez.

Rodriguez squeezed the trigger once more, sending a third round into Rodman's stomach.

"I told you I wasn't kidding," the shooter said.

Rodman's memories of the next five hours of that night in March 2012 are fragmented. Slashes of terror unfolding between lapses in consciousness. But the outline of the case confrontation took against Rodriguez are embossed in his mind.

Rodman being forced to crawl into the front passenger seat. Rodriguez, somewhere inside and methodical at the same time, positioning himself with a gun in the console. Rodman's coworkers, an insurance broker named Tina Evans, being forced to drive the car for 71 miles across northern Vermont and New Hampshire as Rodriguez negotiated with police on the phone and threatened more bloodshed.

Rodman and others survived the ordeal for the first time in interviews with Seven Days, shortly after a December hearing in which Rodriguez, a 37-year-old St. Johnsbury resident, was sent to prison in U.S. District Court to 22 years in prison.

Rodman, who has largely recovered — at least physically — from his wounds, said he expected those hours to be his last.

"You don't bring a gun unless you are planning on using it," he said in an interview in the Wells River apartment he shares with Philip Rodriguez and the three children she had with Oscar Rodriguez. "I figured this was the end."



Linda Rodman says holding a picture of her son Oscar Rodriguez.

## Marriage Goes Bad

Rodman grew up across the Connecticut River from his current home, in tiny Putnam, N.H., and graduated from Woodville High School in 1987.

He stayed in the area his whole life and by 2011 had settled into a midlevel managerial job at Ocean State Job Lot in St. Johnsbury.

During that summer, he grew close with a new colleague, Tina Evans, who now told Rodman about her strained relationship with her longtime husband, Oscar.

The couple had had their first child only months after marrying in their early twenties. Times were tough then: the start. Oscar Rodriguez was diagnosed a few years later with diabetes, which soon led to kidney failure. By the time he was 30, Rodriguez needed kidney dialysis three times a week to stay alive, and doctors told him he would be unlikely to see his 50th birthday.

He struggled to find work, and Philip worked a string of low-paying jobs to make ends meet. They stayed for months at a time with Rodriguez's mother, who lives in a trailer park in St. Johnsbury.

Philip Rodriguez said the relationship turned violent, and court records show she took out a restraining order in 2011, alleging that Oscar had struck both her and their sons.

In the fall of 2011, Philip said, she began making plans to leave Oscar and move to Massachusetts. She obtained permission to transfer to an Ocean State Job Lot store outside Boston and filed for divorce.

But, when Rodriguez learned she couldn't leave the state with her sons before the divorce was finalized, Father compelling her plan, she realized she began to fall for Rodman. They started spending time publicly together outside work and Oscar Rodriguez, according to state and federal

court documents, began to focus his anger on Rodman.

In February 2012, Rodman applied for a restraining order against Rodriguez, accusing him of trying to break into his vehicle, following him while he drove to work, slashing his tires multiple times and leaving threatening voicemail messages.

A judge scheduled a court hearing for March 6, 2012, to decide what, if any, action to take against Rodriguez. The hearing would never occur.

## 'A Bunch of Bullet Holes'

The night before the scheduled hearing was bitterly cold, and plunging temperatures had scared away all but a few customers at Ocean State Job Lot. Rodman and his brother, Bruce, sat down the store together and walked outside into the main parking lot a few minutes after 9 p.m.

Evans testified that the heard footsteps behind them as they walked through the empty parking lot. They turned around and saw a man dressed in a black ski mask, black jacket and boots, and white latex gloves. He had a gun in his hand.

"Keep walking," he said.

Evans thought she recognized the voice. One of her daughters was friendly with Rodriguez's oldest son, and she was aware of the marital strife, she explained while on the witness stand during Rodriguez's sentencing hearing.

Noting Rodman's car, they stopped. "You know what this is about?" said the masked man. For a few brief seconds, a standoff ensued. Then Rodriguez lowered the gun slightly and Rodman thought he saw his chance and rushed forward.

"I wanted the gun," Rodman said in an interview. "That was the only thing I was thinking."

Rodman straddled a sturdy 6-foot-2-inch tall, but Rodriguez as just as big. Rodman couldn't wrestle the gun away. During the struggle, the driver's side window was broken. Rodriguez said he flew off and he laid two shots into Rodman.

Rodman fell to the pavement. After he was shot a third time, Rodriguez ordered him into the car and his victim managed to pull himself into the front passenger seat. Rodman even managed to put his seat belt on.

Rodman endured Evans into the driver's seat, where shards of glass from the broken window dug into her leg. Rodriguez, his gun never leaving his hand, sat in the back.

He ended Evans to drive 36 miles to the Frank D. Comerford Drive in Monroe,



# The Old College Try: In Vermont, 'Affinity Marketing' Targets Alumni

BY CHARLES EICHACKER

**I**magine that you get a letter from an insurance company. Because you or your child attended a certain college, the letter entices you, you could save up to 10 percent on a car insurance plan. A disclaimer mentions that your school's alumni association receives a fee for allowing the company to market those savings. It also directs you to a website where you can unsubscribe from future communications.

Do you take advantage of the savings? Check the letter? Hit that website to opt out of future solicitations? Or do you contact the alumni association directly, worried that your personal information has been sold for profit?

In a process known as "affinity marketing," some companies pay fees to membership organizations — trade and alumni groups, for example — for the right to market discounted services to people at their contact lists. In Vermont, the most visible affinity marketer is Liberty Mutual. The Boston-based provider of home and auto insurance has deals with 750 alumni groups nationwide, including those at the University of Vermont and Vermont state colleges.

The very Liberty Mutual representatives these alumni groups receive from school to school, called "affinity" in UVM, where alumni relations are handled through the UVM Foundation — a legally independent entity incorporated in 2011 — to fundraise for the alumni center — Liberty Mutual pays the association based on how many alumni it succeeds in sign up. At Johnson State College, the alumni association gets a cut for every alum who enrolls.

"The reason that the colleges do it is because it's win-win-win," says Lauren Phillie, director of development and alumni relations at Johnson State. "We get a small percentage of their renewal rates or sign-ups up," she says. "The alumni get a discount, and if Liberty Mutual would be offering the alumni a discount, we would never do it."

But some alumni and privacy advocates doubt these partnerships go so generously — even if they are legal and lead to offers of cheaper services from a Fortune 300 company such as Liberty Mutual. Affinity marketing isn't new, explains

Susan Grant of the Consumer Protection of America, because there has never been a federal law to stop organizations from sharing contact information without their members' consent.

For the corporation "it's obviously the shame of using an existing channel where there is already people with whom the entity, the partner, has some sort of relationship," Grant says. "We certainly don't have an overarching privacy law like most other developed countries of the world do. It's a real problem. It's very frustrating, because you would think you could at least get something enacted that would give people a choice."

One of the roughly 16,000 Johnson State alumni, Phillie estimates that only those who have complained to hit about the college sharing their information "OMG the list, they're like 'Wait a minute, when someone sold my name?'" Phillie says "But we didn't sell it or, sorry, my body's name." This is actually a Johnson State mascot. "We're going into a mutual partnership that they can also benefit out of any time."

Phillie doesn't believe the word "selling" describes what Johnson is doing. College officials upload a fresh contact list

to a secure website for every approved marketing blast. Johnson's contract with Liberty Mutual prohibits the insurance company from using those addresses, and no other personal information is shared until the next round of marketing.

"We don't collect any data," says Glenn Greenberg, senior consultant for public relations at Liberty Mutual. "It's really marketing to a list that's provided to us by the alumni association. We adhere to all the solicitation regulations. If someone on a do-not-call list or something like that, they're notified."

Such assurances don't placate one UVM alumnus who recently requested his own compliance with the UVM Foundation. The fall, Gary Ellenbogen, 24, who lives in New Jersey, notified both a letter and an email from Liberty Mutual. In the November letter, which had a seal from the UVM Alumni Association, the company included a pin number for him to redact these savings. In five print the note informed, "The UVM Alumni Association



receives financial support for allowing Liberty Mutual to offer this auto and home insurance program."

In a subsequent series of emails to the UVM Foundation, Ellenbogen decried the "disrespectful and abusive approach your organization has taken to public alumni members' privacy" to third parties. Of course, he also wanted off the list.

In response, Bob Brady, president and CEO of the UVM Foundation, explained that the alumni association's board of directors carefully reviewed Liberty Mutual's qualifications before deciding to partner with the group. He described the convenience of removing individuals from future email lists, and denied his organization "jacked" Ellenbogen's personal information, saying Liberty Mutual "is authorized to use alumni contact information to market this program and only this program."

The federal CAN-SPAM Act of 2003 only requires that companies creating advertisements allow recipients to opt out of future communications. Instead, Ellenbogen says, he'd like to see the UVM Alumni Association enforce an opt-out policy where alumni would have to consent to receive such communications. In the European Union, companies are required to take that approach.

It's not clear how many of Ellenbogen's fellow alumni share his concerns. The Consumer Protection Unit of the Vermont Attorney General's Office hasn't searched any complaints about Liberty Mutual's solicitations. And in a correspondence Ellenbogen started on the UVM alumni LinkedIn page — now closed by a site administrator — only two individuals responded. One hadn't received any Liberty Mutual emails. The other expressed her appreciation for the savings.

Alan Riva, assistant VP of alumni relations and development services at the

UVM Foundation, says that 23 of the university's 13,000 graduates have contacted him after opting out of future mailings.

What other companies are employing the "affinity" approach? Discover recently started offering a branded credit card to UVM alumni and parents. At Norwich University, alumni can sign up for a United Services Automobile Association rewards credit card.

Other alumni associations around Vermont have been more reluctant to enter into affinity marketing agreements. Middlebury College has never offered its grads any corporate benefits, according to Meg Sherry Gowers, associate VP for alumni relations and annual giving. The reps writing the proposals would require significant time and effort, and the school wouldn't want to be seen as endorsing a particular company.

Angela Arneson, director of alumni and parent relations at St. Michael's College, explains that the school's alumni board hasn't chosen to offer corporate benefits due to concerns about privacy and flooding inboxes that alumni working in the insurance industry have approached the group, Arneson says, and it plans to give the matter more thought this year.

With or without an opt-in policy, St. Mike's and other schools remain free to go that route. That fact, says Grant, is a troubling sign of the times. Ever more personal information is flying across the internet every day, she says, and that is worth a lot of companies.

"There is a lot of resistance to any sort of federal legislation on the part of companies, and that resistance is only getting tougher in this era of 'Tag, You're It,'" Grant says. "The presumption is not that people in control of your information are being chased... it's just not where we're at." ☐

Contact: charles@vermontnow.com

OFF THE BAT, THEY'RE LIKE  
"WAIT A MINUTE, WHOA,  
SOMEONE SOLD MY NAME?"

LAUREN PHILLIE





Oliver Rodriguez

## Violent Odyssey

Rodriguez was admitted to Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, N.H., where doctors pumped 15 liters of blood into him before they could even begin operating. He stayed there for six months. His spleen was removed, his pancreas repaired and his leg healed.

The prosecution of Rodriguez dragged on for nearly two years, slowed by a transfer of the case from state to federal court and by complications that arose when Rodriguez suffered kidney failure in prison.

But in late 2011, a plea deal was struck. On a recent December afternoon, Rodriguez rose during his sentencing hearing and offered his first public comments on the ordeal.

"I take responsibility for everything, and I'm truly sorry," he said, before being led away by sheriff's deputies to serve a 22-year sentence for kidnapping and attempted murder (because of his kidney problems, doctors expect Rodriguez to die in prison long before that sentence expires).

His attorney, Michael Desautels, argued that Rodriguez intended to kill only himself that night, and that he was "self-centered."

Recent told the judge that she now lives in constant fear she rarely leaves home except to go to work. Her children call her constantly to make sure she is safely at home back from her shifts at the store.

"I don't do anything any more," Escobar said.

In the summer of 2011, Rodriguez went back to work and new parks in the same lot where he was kidnapped.

Like he lives with new limitations. He walks with a cane, the result of a blood clot that developed in his leg after he was shot. He must take blood-thinning medicine (which makes him drowsy) for the rest of his life. Walking for any length of time now exhausts him, he hasn't bothered to get a fishing license for the past two summers.

"Some days I feel ashamed," Rodriguez said.

He and Fabiana Rodriguez are raising her three children, who range in age from 9 to 16 and have not seen their father since his arrest. The Rodriguez divorce is pending.

While the criminal case has wrapped up, the incident is never far from Rodriguez's mind. A few months after the incident, his dad returned to him a box of belongings that had been left in his car after police finished cleaning up. The night he was abducted, Rodriguez was wearing his Green State Job Lot store tag, which hung on a lanyard just above his belly.

When he pulled the same tag out of the box, he saw the plastic marked with a streak of red and a small round opening. It almost looked like the mark of a holepunch. ☐

Contact Mark Davis at mark@sevendaysnt.com.

Happy Holidays



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# Public to Private: Could 'Conversion' Become a Trend in Vermont Schools?

BY KATHYNN FLAGG | PHOTOS BY PETER CHRISTENSE

**W**hen North Bennington residents voted to shutter their public school, it wasn't because of rising teacher pay or declining test scores. Far from it. They were worried the state would close or consolidate the small, kindergarten-through-sixth-grade school in their town of 1,600. So they pre-empted fate and made it private. The school district now pays tuition for North Bennington children to attend the new Village School.

"The reason we walked down this path was we wanted to sustain the school as it was, at the heart of the community, providing the services that it does to our district children," says Ray McWilliams, a 16-year veteran of the Prudential Committee, which governs the public school district. "We wanted to maintain local control, and we wanted to retain the climate and character and quality of the school."

For their part, state officials say North Bennington had no reason to believe its elementary school's days were numbered — and the town's course of action could have unintended consequences.

"Basically what they did is turn over complete control of the school to a body that is not answerable to the public," says outgoing Vermont Secretary of Education Amanda Wilson.

"They made a local decision to give up local control, and that's ironic in a way," says Wilson's successor, Robert Holcombe.

In winning that control from the local supervisory union and state education officials, North Bennington kindled a statewide debate about the role of independent schools in Vermont. Wilson, who leaves his post this month, confirmed North Bennington's move in a report released in December and strongly suggested state lawmakers forbid any future privatization of public schools.

Further, Wilson's recommendations suggest major changes to the way Vermont treats independent schools — many of which receive public dollars to educate students who are "at-risk" or in other communities without public schools of their own. Wilson argues that independent schools receiving public funds should provide free and reduced lunch programs. He wants private schools with publicly funded enrollments of 25 percent or more to provide the same services, and meet the same guidelines, as public schools, and is urging the legislature to repeal a provision in state law that allows communities to approve higher tuition rates for independent schools.

Advocates of independent schools are fighting back. They say Wilson hoped the summer study committee that was supposed to report back to the legislature on the state and local implications of public schools closing and going independent. Seth Bengtson, the chair of Burrand Burton Academy's board of trustees, said Wilson was "contemnerous of the process, of the legislative directive, of our time." That report was eventually vetoed before we ever thought about meeting.

Travis Boswell, the head of Manchester's Maple Street School, was also on Wilson's summer study committee. "It felt like the process was really inclusive, and the product was really inclusive," he says, naming the resulting report falls short of the substantial change to help legislators make informed decisions about independent schools.

Wilson stated clearly in the controversial December 5 report that its recommendations are his own and not reflective of the committee — that was always his intention, he claims. In response, five members of the committee representing independent schools authored a dissenting report, arguing against "unnecessary legislation" and saying that it is "wise for Vermont to not only keep school choice where it is, but to look to expand it to all districts, positioning our state to be a national leader in education."

"Of course," independent schools are concerned when officials such as Wilson put the spotlight on their practices, and Matt Wilson, executive director of the Vermont Independent Schools Association, "Everybody's worried about the cost of education. Money is a contested right now."

As a stressed \$864 million in public funds were to independent academic institutions last year. When North Bennington opted to close its school, it became one of 91 towns in Vermont that let families decide where to send their children to school — and financed their choices with taxpayer dollars. Roughly 11 percent of Vermont's K-12 students attend independent schools, that number, provided by VISA, includes children whose parents elect to pay tuition as well as those whose tuition fees are covered by towns that don't operate schools.

Most funded students attending independent schools are in middle or high school, but around "tens of thousands" of elementary school kids, between 2,000 and 3,000 students attend Vermont's four towns academically, which are private institutions that act like the de facto public schools in their communities. Some date back more than 100 years, and more than every student who had from the towns they serve. State officials are quick



North Bennington elementary school

to say that their concerns about the North Bennington situation don't extend to these academic institutions.

Wilson doubts that many other districts would go to the lengths that North Bennington has to change its school structure. But he says that doesn't mean all Vermont school districts are happy with the status quo.

"I do think some small districts are looking at this," says Wilson. "They feel left out. They feel unengaged. [They have] legitimate concerns and they're not getting much response."

## Same School, Different Structure

North Bennington's primary school doesn't look much different today than it did this time last year. The public school officially closed on the last Friday in June 2013, and reopened as an independent school the following Monday morning. Students returned to the building on September 4.

Students still settle in for classes in the same sturdy brick schoolhouse that dates back to the late 19th century. Even classroom instruction remains largely unchanged. Students here still take standardized tests, and teachers adhere to the new "Common Core" standards in place at public schools throughout Vermont.

Through most of the transition, they did so only after being technically laid off by the local school district and rehired by the independent school, their salaries and benefits stayed the same, but they no longer have union contracts or representation.

The change can be seen in the office of Thomas Martin — a former principal, now headmaster, who spent 60 years in public education. Martin is now running what amounts to a small business. He oversees payroll, internet services, building and maintenance issues — basically, anything and everything previously handled by the supervisory union.

His office is part workplace, part Willy Wonka confection. There's a talking popcorn machine in one corner, and shelves and pedestals line the walls. Kits and brightly colored whirlpigs dangle from the ceiling. On a snowy winter morning, the radiator sends up a trail of jerrying clanks, bangs and rumbles.

Since coming on at North Bennington's principal in 2006, Martin has watched the town grapple with decisions about the school's future. He ticks off a laundry list of considerations at a special study groups that looked into the bigger picture of school sustainability, then more specifically into the idea of going independent. He calls the

# **I HAVE MORE FLEXIBILITY AND FREEDOM TO DO WHAT'S BEST FOR OUR SCHOOL.**

THOMAS MARTIN



THOMAS MARTIN

in schools — happened in a matter of mere months in the Village School.

"I have more flexibility and freedom to do what's best for our school," says Martin. Outside, kids are spending happily during their mid-morning recess. When Martin dashes outside to speak with a colleague, a small boy chases him. "Mr. Martin! Put on a coat!" The snow is coming down heavily. A few of the older children have construction shovels which they used down a small slope on the playground.

Sixth-grade teacher Pat Gibbons, a 35-year veteran at the school, adjusts her pink checked, snow-dusted charges back toward, where the students settle down for a period of silent reading.

North Bennington educated 170 students a year when Gibbons started as a teacher here. At one point during her tenure, there were as many as 250 kids in the building, and she's now numbers dip as low as 116. That's not true, by Vermont standards, but community members still worried about the enrollment trends.

"In this age of downsizing, it's hard to assume that a small village school will have to struggle to save its identity," she says. "We have a very special village school that we wanted to retain."

North Bennington was the second community in Vermont to close its public elementary school and assign a privately run one in its place. The first, Wehali, closed its public school in 1986 and complaints about per pupil costs — they were the highest in the state of Vermont at the time — and the quality of education.

Fifteen years later, North Bennington's decision was based on very different reasons. Formerly known as the North Bennington Graded School, the elementary school and its teachers are beloved in the community. Advocates for going independent hoped that liberating the school from the restrictions of public education would help keep it afloat in years to come. There'd be the possibility of fundraising for its success, and of attracting students from

neighboring communities whose parents might be willing to pay tuition.

"This model is not a panacea," says Martin. "It doesn't make the problems and challenges we were facing go away. It does give us some control."

There's still a public school district in North Bennington, but now it pays tuition — \$11,000 per pupil this year — to the Village School instead of operating its own K-12 learning facility. The Village School, in turn, leases its brick schoolhouse from the district for \$75,000 a year. After they graduate from sixth grade, Village School students go on to attend the public Mount Anthony Union Middle and High schools.

## **Losing Local Control?**

That North Bennington's Village School survived its first semester hasn't assuaged the concerns of state officials and lawmakers.

In his report to lawmakers, Vilasius argues that a community's decision to take a public school private poses some potential problems for the state. Vilasius is concerned that the switch to independent status will limit the educational opportunities for some students. The school provides special-edition services for all eligible current students, but there's no guarantee, Vilasius says, that it will continue to do so in the future.

Malleson says that's just not true. He says North Bennington's independent school has pledged to provide special-edition services for any child that it can reasonably accommodate in the building. If a student were so severely disabled that he or she couldn't be accommodated, the public school district would fund a student's placement in a specialized program — but that's always been the case, and happens in towns that operate public schools, too.

There really isn't a public school in the state that can take every student with every disability," says Malleson.

Meanwhile, officials say there's also a potential financial risk when it comes to going independent. While the Agency of Education says it's too early to know the financial impact on taxpayers, the switch means the town loses direct control of the independent schools' budget. Districts that operate public schools can draw down every year into the line item of their school budgets. North Bennington voters won't have that option.

Looking at the big picture, though, the way the town faces education won't change, North Bennington will still pay property taxes for education to Montpelier, and receive money back depending on the tuition budget voters approve. North Bennington, like all towns in the Southeast Vermont Supervisory Union, is considered a "moving" district under the state-wide system that funds education and is designed to spread the wealth between

rich and poor communities. That means the town gets back more for education than it contributes in property tax dollars.

"It's clear that these people care very deeply about their children," says Holcombe, but the sign she's still concerned that "maybe this decision hasn't been fully thought through." The town is still liable and responsible for educating all its children, she says, but North Bennington has "given up control without responsibility."

In response, independent school advocates say there is a different kind of accountability at these schools, if parents don't like the way a school is run, or aren't happy with the results of their child's education, they can leave. Already Martin says he's fielding phone calls from parents of next year's kindergarteners. The question isn't when those children will enroll at his school, but if "in theory, that competitive pressure should keep the school on its toes."

"The most powerful voice the community has been a choice," says Vilasius.

But public schools serve more than just children and families, says Rep. Johnathan Donovan (D-Bennington), the chair of the House Education Committee. Donovan introduced legislation last year that would have prevented further school conversions like the one in North Bennington. The bill didn't pass, but Donovan and other lawmakers are gearing up for another conversation about independent schools in the 2001 legislative session.

"The schools in Vermont do not exist for parents. They exist for the community and for the good of all of us," says Donovan. "They exist because of a common need to develop good citizens, good employees, good family people."

Donovan says his critique of what happened in North Bennington isn't an attack on independent schools, but the supports the size of further investigating Vermont's unusual school-choice system, particularly in cases where independent schools are receiving significant taxpayer money. In those cases, he believes, like Vilasius, that schools should "have to play within the same sort of rules that other municipalities do that take public dollars" — that school lunch, services for children with disabilities and other programs mandated for public schools.

Malleson isn't worried about North Bennington's short-term prospects. He says that any community that goes to the trouble of doing it is "committed to doing the right things for kids."

"I think that if local control is to mean anything, you have to trust the communities to make these decisions for themselves about how they want to provide education for their children," says Malleson. "We have to embrace that, not sit back in the way of them." ☐

Contact: kathy@seventeenth.com

final proposal "one of the most carefully vetted" he's ever seen, and though he had reservations (mainly about the plan — he cites "urban stereotypes" that get attached to private schools, such as kids in blazers — he came to support the idea.

After North Bennington voters approved it — "overwhelmingly," Martin says now, by roughly 80 percent — state education officials took notice. First came a phone call from Vilasius, voicing concerns about the vote, followed by discouraging meetings in Montpelier. Then the Vermont Board of Education delayed the approval of the new independent school pending back the timeline for North Bennington's shift and triggering one more review at the process.

Martin says he is aware the town would get resistance from officials — "bureaucrats don't like outsiders," he says — but he was taken aback by the year-and-a-half-long struggle.

The good news? He says life is proceeding relatively smoothly at the new independent school. After years of talk about offering language instruction, the school is partnering with students from Bennington College to provide it. What wasn't possible before — because of employment contracts, and requirements that the supervisory union offer similar programming at all of



**Leon K. Najarian**  
HOPEDALE, MASS. 1939-2019

Leon K. "Budger" Najarian of Hopedale died Wednesday, December 18, 2019, at home. He was born on May 13, 1939, in Northford, Mass., the son of the late Norval and Joseph Najarian. He graduated from Northford High School in 1958. He is survived by his wife of 44 years, Pamela; his children, Linda and Ronald Dixon of Southwick, Ala., and Greg Najarian and Alyssa Velle of Bedford, Mass.; grandchildren, Jared, Katelyn, and Ryan Dixon and Cassidy Najarian; his brother George Najarian and his wife, Janet, of Walpole; and several nieces and nephews.

In 1969, he started as a field service tech from the mechanical manufacturing industry after working for such companies as Ford, General Motors and Eaton. He was a lifetime member of the Hopedale Post and Rifle Club, where he served as treasurer, and the Mengerack Road and Gun Club of Milford, Mass.

In his retirement, he enjoyed spending time with his family, especially his grandchildren, traveling, and most especially, riding his Harley to such places as Vermont, Maine and New Hampshire and across country to South Dakota.

His family will have a private celebration of his life gathering in a later date. In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to a charity of your choice. [funeralhomevt.com](http://funeralhomevt.com)



**BIRTHS**

**Kai Ashton Orten**

On December 5, 2019, at Fletcher Allen Health Care, Angelle Peal and Jonathan Orten welcomed a baby boy, Kai Ashton Orten.

**Lucas Andrej Tomasi**

On December 12, 2019, at Fletcher Allen Health Care, Lidija Mujumcovic and David Tomasi welcomed a baby boy, Lucas Andrej Tomasi.

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# Mt. Ellen's 50<sup>th</sup> Celebration

Jan 9 - 12 2014

## Thursday, Jan 9<sup>th</sup>

3:00 AM - 6:00 PM

**1963-PRICED LIFT TICKETS (\$6.50)**

For all ages (6 and under free) Mt. Ellen only.

2:00 - 4:00 PM

**MAO RIVER VALLEY CITIZEN'S CHALLENGE**  
including the Valley Restaurant Cup

3:00 - 6:00 PM

Live music by **THE GULCH**  
in the Golden Thicket (Green Mountain Lounge, free)

## Friday, Jan 10<sup>th</sup>

3:00 - 6:00 PM

**SKI AND RIDE with THE POINT**

Agnes celebration (Green Mountain Lounge, free)

8:00 PM

Over to Green Mount Promises,  
**"THE 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF GLEN ELEN"**  
(Glen House, free)

## Sat. Jan 11<sup>th</sup>

2:00 PM

**SUGARBUSH CELEBRITY SKI RACE**

3:00 PM

**SELANDESPRUNG CHAMPIONSHIP**

Mt. Ellen base area

**CONWELL CHAMPAGNE PARTY**

(Green Mountain Lounge)

7:00 PM

**MT. ELLEN TORCHLIGHT PARADE and FIREWORKS**

7:00 PM - MIDNIGHT

**FASHING COSTUME BALL**

with live music by **GRIPPO FUNK BAND**

(Green Mountain Lounge, \$10)

## Sun. Jan 12<sup>th</sup>

11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

**ELLIOTT SUNDAY BRUNCH BUFFET**

(Green Mountain Lounge, \$15/adult, \$7.50/child)

For details and to purchase tickets call 800 83.SUGAR or go to [sugarbush.com/glenellen](http://sugarbush.com/glenellen).



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**JOSEPH LAMBERT** is a cartoonist and illustrator who lives in Vermont.



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## The Endangered Alphabets Project Finds Partners Around the World

BY ETHAN DE SEIFE | PHOTOS BY MATTHEW THORSEN

These are our words, shaped  
By our hands, our tools,  
Our history. Lose them  
And we lose ourselves.

**T**his verse adorns the walls of three schoolhouses in the region of southwestern Bangladesh known as the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Each was written by a Vermont author, translated into the indigenous languages Mro, Mru and Chakma and hand carved into mahogany planks. About 8,000 miles separate Vermont and Bangladesh, but an extraordinary project is bridging that distance in a most unusual way.

**ENDANGERED ALPHABETS** is an ambitious linguistic project created by Burlington's **TIM BROOKES**, a writer, artist and instructor at professional writing at Champlain College. Physically, it consists of well-polished wooden plaques, into each of which Brookes has carved a text in one of the world's many dying languages—that is, those spoken or written by a small and dwindling number of people.

In recent months, Brookes, 64, has struck up two unusual partnerships that are bringing his work to the living lexicons and expanding *Endangered Alphabets*' portfolio. His attention at how the project has grown and metamorphosed since its inception in 2010. "It's a constant series of surprises," Brookes says.

Now people speak Mro, Mru or Chakma anywhere, even in Bangladesh. Political and cultural forces have confined these languages to small geographic areas, and to members of specific ethnic groups. Mro, for instance, has fewer than 20,000 speakers. Bangladesh has one official language, Bengali, in which all business and education are conducted.

In previous centuries, colonization and the spread of a global economy were the principal forces behind the extinction of indigenous languages. Now, the internet plays a leading role in linguistic homogenization. English and Mandarin are the giants there. About half of all websites use one of those two languages.

The *Endangered Languages Project* at UNESCO—the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization—estimates that, without intervention, nearly half of the 6,000 languages spoken around the globe today



will disappear by the end of the century.

With the *disappearance of indigenous languages* comes the likely disappearance of the scripts in which they are written. At present, just five alphabets—Latin (the one used to make English-language characters), Arabic, Cyrillic, Chinese and Japanese—are used in the great majority of printed text, that is, the graceful calligraphies of the Mroplam alphabet that first inspired Brookes' project.

He became a passionate advocate for protecting disappearing languages and scripts, both in the beginning, Brookes just wanted to try his hand at woodcarving.

As he explains in his 2010 book *Endangered Alphabets*, the project began when some attractive pieces of carved lumber at Burlington's **STANLEY HANDMADE** caught his eye. With those planks, Brookes carved signs for family members. Then he thought to challenge himself by carving words in other languages, and found that he enjoyed the intense focus the project required. "Carving was extremely minute and finicky and demanding," he says.

That didn't stop him from carving 16 plaques for his first exhibition in 2010. Brookes soon branched out into threatened languages such as Nam (from Vietnam) and Raga (from Indonesia),



Tim Brookes carving a Mroplam script plaque.

in which he carved translations of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"I've never been a visual artist," says Brookes. "I didn't really think of it at the time in the way people think of art. I thought of it as preserving language using this wood."

Soon, he found ways to appreciate the curves of his chosen scripts with the natural curves in the wood. To incorporate a human-made pattern atop "decorative, older patterns that we recognize but can't understand—there's the human condition in a nutshell," Brookes says. "This was not something I'd understood until I'd done it."

As his passion for the project grew, Brookes took to the internet, creating both a blog and a Kickstarter campaign. He also maintains a website with a gift shop offering merch such as T-shirts, mugs and even furniture featuring endangered alphabets. The blog caught the attention of Mwangi Nyoro, a Bangladeshi natural and cultural student at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Nyoro is also executive director of a foundation called Our Golden Hour. Founded in 2011, the charitable organization is dedicated to educating children in the Chittagong Hill Tracts

and to preserving that region's endangered cultural history.

In a recent phone conversation with *Seven Days* from Cambridge, Mass., Nyoro says, "I was really happy and excited to see that someone from Vermont—halfway around the world from the Chittagong Hill Tracts—was carving alphabets that most of the local population cannot read or write anymore."

He contacted Brookes, and before long the two were collaborating not only on placing the plaques in schools but on a unique series of books.

Nyoro's ongoing project asks Bangladeshi students to tell their parents or grandparents to tell their stories from their own youth. After writing down the stories in their indigenous language, the students read them aloud to classmates. Scans of the pages and video recordings of the readings are uploaded to Dropbox, from which Nyoro retrieves and transcribes them. Those stories then become the very material that our students will study to learn about their own language and culture.

Brookes joined the project in his role as the founder, editor and publisher of the **CHAMPLAIN COLLEGE PUBLISHING INITIATIVE**, a program that gives students practical experience in print and

LANGUAGE





## In Honor of Elvis: South Burlington 'King' Leads a Parallel Life

BY PAMELA POLSTON

A few weeks ago, when I realized the first issue of *Seven Days* in 2014 would be on January 8 — Elvis Presley's birthday — I determined to find and interview an Elvis impersonator. I contacted a cheeky Q&A with someone who spends much of his time imitating the King of Rock and Roll. I'd find out what it was like to imitate from Normal Dade into Beloved Bicy Icon, where he got his outfit, whether ladies throw parties at room keys at him, if anyone under the age of 30 knows who the hell he was — that sort of thing.

But Elvis proved elusive. A friend actually saw one — with a vintage car, even — on the street in Boston, but failed to get his name. A Google search for "Elvis Impersonator Vermont" took me — far out of town. (Note to Google: New York is not in Vermont.) A colleague and I turned up two leads, but both had retracted their promises.

Finally, I heard about **HIGLEY HARMON**. And the story took a turn I did not anticipate.

Now, it must be said that the 37-year-old South Burlington resident did not set out to be an "impersonator." He was a Beatles fan growing up. He doesn't look like Elvis. And, though he has a genuine sort of Southern accent, he doesn't sound like Elvis. He doesn't sing, and his lips or several his hips. But Harmon can dance.

In a ballroom dance class back in his native Maryland, he met his future wife, and it was for her that Higley Harmon became Elvis Presley. In a recent interview at the couple's home near South Burlington, where — where there's a spring dance floor in the basement — I find out why Our soundtracks as an all-Elvis Strain channel creating stuff in the rear room.

Harmon is married to **ROSEANNE GREENE**. Locals know her as a former nurse, retired Air Force colonel, named South Burlington city councilor and anti-P&G activist. Greene's name has been in the news a lot over the past couple of years (he was even recently nominated for Vermontor of the Year in the Burlington *Free Press*), but not once have the headlines noted she is a huge Elvis fan. Go figure.



HIGLEY HARMON and ROSEANNE GREENE

**YOU CAN PUT AN ELVIS COSTUME ON A BROOM HANDLE, AND IT'LL GET A LOT OF ATTENTION.**

HIGLEY HARMON

When Greene met Harmon in dance class in 2003, she was living in Maryland and he had just retired from her military career. Harmon was a few years shy of his own retirement from a food-distribution company. "We were the only ones who didn't come with partners, so we were matched," says Greene, 65. "That, we wouldn't have learned to dance, or gotten married."

Harmon acquired his alter ego at the other Well, almost. The 48er-organized Greene had planned their wedding within an inch of its life, so Harmon decided to sock the surprise on his bride at the reception. Prepared to give a dance lesson to the guests — the entire event was dance-themed — Greene had changed into a fancy red dress. Harmon excused himself to the men's room, and emerged as Elvis. In on the prank,

the band began to play Presley's Vegas on-stage entrance tune ("Jailhouse Rock/Australia," also the theme from 2003, *A Space Odyssey*).

"I looked around the room and thought Higley had lived in Elvis impersonator," Greene recalls. "And then I realized it was Higley. It was adorable."

"It was bigger than the wedding," says Harmon. "As I was walking up with two American flags, people started hollering around me."

"It's the mystique of Elvis," Greene explains.

So powerful is the suspension of disbelief? When "Elvis" enters the room that "people were stealing money in my jacket!" Harmon marvels.

Greene had intended to teach the male wedding guests the foxtrot, but she had few takers. Meanwhile, she says, "Higley had 30 women lined up to dance with Elvis."

On their honeymoon, Greene and Harmon went to, yep, Graceland. The couple eventually made their

way to Vermont, where Greene had vowed to spend her retirement years. And Harmon did not leave his parasol behind. Now working as a schoolbus driver, he says he'll sometimes don the white parasol, black wig and orisator for Halloween. "The kids think I'm Michael Jackson or Brad Pitt," he says with a grin.

Harmon and Greene also occasionally perform as dancers for nonprofit fund-raising events — "We'll dress as Elvis, I as a teeny bopper," she says. Greene recalls one costume party where the couple swapped roles — gender roles, that is the worst as Elvis, and Harmon went as Marilyn Monroe. When they enacted Marilyn's classic windy skirt scene, partygoers were treated to the sight of Harmon's emerald-blue under.

Harmon has even attended an P&G rally in costume, carrying a sign that announced "Elvis says no to the P&S."

One of Harmon's favorite "80s" is hanging out in Elvis wear at the South Burlington farmers market in the summer. "It's amazing how people [arriving] hook their horns and blow me kisses," he says. "It's not like I look that good in it."

Asked why Elvis has such enduring magnetism, Harmon suggests it's because his music is so powerful. Ah, huh. Greene's explanation touches on the "Markkian fruit" theme. When she was a kid, she explains, "We weren't allowed to watch him or listen to him — his generation was scandalous."

Not until she was an adult did Greene finally experience Presley's music and movies. But further the appeal wasn't the rebellion of rock and roll. "He had an extraordinary mix, and his concerts were mesmerizing. He put on a show, can just a concert," she says. "His was a man to be respected; he had a powerful personality. He was riveting."

On the school bus one December, Harmon combined his iconography. Seated next to him, she wore sunglasses. Daring home in his own car after work, he says, "I get looks from everyone." Motorists staring at red lights did double takes, gazed at him and waved. "Everyone knows Elvis except kids," Harmon claims. "You can put an Elvis costume on a broom handle, and it'll get a lot of attention."

Come to think of it, Elvis is kind of a Santa Claus for adults. "A lot of people," notes Greene semi-seriously, "want to believe Elvis is still alive."

Happy 79th, King ☺

## Burlington Writers Workshop Supplies Words to Hotel Vermont—and Gets a Room of Its Own

BY MAGGOT HARRISON

**S**ure, it's nice to find a locally crafted chocolate on your pillow in a boutique hotel. But how about a locally crafted sonnet on your bedside tablet?

That could soon happen at Burlington's new Hotel Vermont, which has entered into an unusual partnership with the **BURLINGTON WRITERS WORKSHOP**. As we reported in December on *Seven Days*'s Live Culture blog, the hotel will distribute a small compilation of poems, essays and stories by BWW members to each of its 126 rooms, giving the guests a taste of local lit.

That's in tune with Hotel Vermont's branding as an establishment that showcases Vermont products, from food to building materials to art. "The art is an integral part of the Hotel Vermont experience," says Marketing Coordinator **YOUNG CANNON** in a December 18 press release.

The compilation will be **revised quarterly**, with BWW organizer **PETER BELLO** selecting and sometimes soliciting submissions from the group's members, he says. The first installment, featuring work that appeared in *The Best of the Burlington Writers Workshop 2013*, should appear in hotel rooms in the next few weeks, says Cannon.

Meanwhile, BWW members are at work assembling a second annual "best of" anthology due out in April. And the free workshop series, which has grown by leaps and bounds since its founding in 2004, has acquired its own dedicated space at Burlington's **STANISLAW**.

The BWW currently counts 476 members on the organizational website [BurlingtonWritersWorkshop.com](http://BurlingtonWritersWorkshop.com), Bello says, of whom about 200 are active. That's a lot of writers to squeeze into 18 person workshops on the classic creative-writing class model. Participants read one another's work and offer in-depth critique.

Until recently, the BWW met on the lower floor of downtown's Halfpence, which was only available in the evenings. The search for a permanent home, Bello says, "growing out of the overwhelming need for a place to meet during the day." He'd noted the popularity of daytime meetings held at the **VERMONT WRITERS PRESS** headquarters in the Old North End. "We had so many people who said, 'We want a space!'"

Then Bello found himself at Studio 206 (off 266 South Champlain Street) on a First Friday art walk with **COLLEEN McLAUGHLIN**, a BWW member who has an art studio there. Taking the size and the price, he went put down rent on a spacious room, he says, thinking, "I'll just do it, and I'll hope that everybody backs me up later."

BWW members have indeed come through with unannounced contributions, which currently cover about half of the space's \$600 to \$650 monthly rent and heating costs. Last Saturday, they gathered to write the room with a coffee machine, couch and other casual writerly amenities. "We have a lot of visual artists around the group, and they'd like to put work up on the walls," says Bello, who



convinced First Friday events combining words and visual stimulation.

There certainly won't be a shortage of the former. Most weeks, the BWW schedules four or five workshops, which quickly fill to capacity. About eight members have volunteered to host workshops, providing informal leadership. The offerings have become more specialized, as well, with short-fiction writers, poets and creative nonfiction writers holding dedicated gatherings. Novels can air their entire creations over a series of "book-length narrative nights." The new space will accommodate demand for unscheduled workshops, Bello says, and a horror-fiction workshop is planned.

Special events and readings are in the works, too. In November, the BWW held a publishing-panel featuring, among others, Vermont novelist **JON CLARK**, who recently moved to self-publishing after two well-received books with Random House. On January 10, the BWW will team up with Magic Hat Brewing Company for "We Tolerate An Evening of Strident Adult Drinking" at the Artichoke. After free writers read their booze-themed narratives, audience members can contribute their own.

Why are the workshops so popular?

Bello — a producer at **VERMONT PUBLIC RADIO** who writes fiction — says he often hears from BWW writers that they like both the "social aspect" and the feedback. "People want to learn how to do what they're doing more effectively. They really want to know what their work looks like to someone else," he says. "Normally [writers] are alone and wondering if they're any good and wondering how they could possibly get better."

And, of course, it helps that the work shops are frequent and free, making it easy for participants to come and go. "Some people arrive at a certain point where they've learned all they want to learn, and they can go off on their own," Bello says. "I'm not encouraging dependence on the workshop."

BWW writers may not be dependent on their gatherings, but donations toward rental of the new writing center suggest that a critical mass of them is eager to commit. ☐

### INFO

**ART TRAIL** All evening at **STANISLAW** House Drawing, Thursday January 16, 6-10 PM at 1000 Park Ave. at Maple Hill Farming Company in South Burlington. [burlingtonwritersworkshop.com](http://burlingtonwritersworkshop.com)

## CIRCLING WINOOSKI

With barely three months behind it, the cooperative gallery **WINOOSKI CO-OP ARTS**—yes, facing the infamous traffic circle—was informed by banking owner **Hall Keen** that it had to move out by January 15. Co-owner **LEAH CORNELL** sent a letter to members of the nascent co-op last week giving them the bad news.

But she said there was also good news—about Corneil. Corneil is negotiating for another space "that will be even better than the one we are now in" and hopes to announce that very soon.

Cornell put a positive spin on the developments in her letter.



When we started with the pop-ups in 2012, none of the commercial spaces were occupied and it seemed nobody wanted them when artists were in. They make a neighborhood exciting and desirable, and then others, who more

income and cash flow want to move in.

In the case of the Hall Keen building, this has been a good thing. This year marked the new year open-to-the-public, then Keen took the bar sales moved in and soon Money Loans Company will open its bakery. There are all wonderful local businesses and we are happy that they are here and wish them all the very best success.

Seven Days wrote — too optimistically it turned out — about WCA as "telling it to stay" in a previous state of the Arts story and in our year-end

follow-ups. But Corneil and fellow owner **JON HARRINGTON** are nothing if not dogmatically determined to show and sell art, or, in Winoski. In fact, says Corneil, "We're actively seeking artist members and are figuring ahead with plans to move and building a cooperative market."

Meanwhile, the store is open through January 15 and notes Corneil, "We're having some amazing sales, including show-room furniture."

Stay tuned for updates here or on the Seven Days blog Live Culture.

### INFO

**PAMELA POLSTON**  
[WINOOSKICOOPARTS.COM](http://WINOOSKICOOPARTS.COM)

## Dear Cecil,

I once read of a construction-industry scandal in New York involving a supplier of large nuts and bolts used to hold together steel beams in skyscrapers. He cheated by substituting cheaper, under-spec nuts and bolts for the proper ones. Evidently several skyscrapers were built using these inferior connectors. The cost to retrofit the buildings would be in the billions of dollars, and only a few have been repaired. What is the chance one or more of these buildings will collapse primarily because of the fraud? Which streets in Manhattan should I avoid, lest one of these behemoths topple as I pass by?

Jim Pawhuska, Okla.



can hold 150,000 PSI. High-performance fasteners are typically stamped with special markings, but it's not hard to create fakes from inferior materials at lower cost. Those have been blamed for numerous deaths.

- In 1969 counterfeit bolts holding together the tail of a Pan Am Flight 394 came loose, cutting the aircraft in diagonals at 22,000 feet, killing all 25 aboard.

- Counterfeit bolts were blamed for a 1965 accident involving a U.S. Army self-propelled howitzer, in which the mechanism that elevates the gun snapped its bolts and crashed a soldier.

- Counterfeit bolts were suspected in two fatal crane accidents in the 1980s — more about this directly.

But bolts have also been cited as the cause of two military helicopter accidents, twice industrial bolts and a head-cracking tower collapse, all of which resulted in fatalities. The Astro 1 space lab, launched in 1990, had to be reassembled at a cost of more than \$15 million when it was discovered that defective bolts had been supplied

by a shady outfit operating out of a condominium garage.

Most of these cases happened prior to 1990. In that year, following reports that nearly 400 people had been killed over a 15-year period in accidents caused by counterfeit nuts and bolts, Congress passed the Fastener Quality Act, which levies stiff fines against suppliers of substandard products. Perhaps as a result, but better stories have subsided — although not disappeared. In 2012 a company called Statens Products was indicted for selling fake main rotor bolts for Sikorski helicopters to the U.S. military. (The sentence in question is popularly known as the “chain rule,” presumably because if it kills you’ll be seeing Jesus soon.)

Back to these crane accidents. One of them happened when a construction crane fell off a building in New York, giving us the following cautionary situation: (a) a Manhattan building was endangered due to a weakness involving bolts, but not due to false bolts; (b) many people have construction bolts killed due to bad bolts; (c) a few of said fatalities were in New York; but (d) none lately as far as I know — recent NYC crane collapses have involved things like faulty ropes or ill-fitted, shoddy film canisters, but at least you’ve got the facts.

That sounds pretty reasonable, but — I think you’ve got a couple separate stories mixed up. One involves Citicorp Center in midtown Manhattan, which was placed in peril of collapse when bolted joints were substituted for stronger welded ones to save a couple bucks during construction. The other is the equally frightening phenomenon of counterfeit nuts and bolts, which, when surreptitiously used instead of the genuine article, can (and do) result in catastrophic failure and death.

Citicorp Center first. This 59-story building, completed in 1977 and now known as 601 Lexington Avenue, has two notable features: first, a distinctive steel-topped profile, and second, four main supporting piers, nine stories tall, each located on the corner of all four sides of the building’s square

footprint rather than in the corners.

The latter evidently frustrated some participants in the construction process. Although the building was originally designed to hold without the expected wind loads, the contractor came up with the aforementioned idea of substituting bolts for welds in the building’s wind-bracing system. This wasn’t inherently crazy, but (among other regrettable decisions) engineers evaluating the change’s impact failed to calculate the effect of winds striking the building at a 45-degree angle rather than straight on.

But long after completion, the “bad structural engineer” notified the building could be toppled by a storm of a severity that an average was seen in New York once every 16 years. The owners sent a frantic summer engineering 300-bolted joints with welded-in steel plates,

working on weekends when the building was unoccupied. The danger thus averted didn’t become public knowledge till a 1993 article in the *New Yorker*.

To be clear: While bolted joints are cheaper and inherently weaker, nothing I’ve seen suggests their use in Citicorp Center was merely or that the bolts themselves were substandard. We found no cases of shoddy dealing by a vendor enlarging major buildings in New York or elsewhere. The fact remains that in this age of global supply chains, shoddy counterfeit fasteners pose a real danger.

Bolts, nuts and other fasteners are commonly rated for strength, corrosion resistance and so on. For example, a Society of Automotive Engineers grade 1 bolt can hold 60,000 pounds per square inch (PSI) before breaking, while a more expensive grade 8 bolt

## INFO

Is there something you need to get straight? Cecil Adams can deliver the Straight Dope on any topic. Write Cecil Adams at the Chicago Reader, 110 W. Wacker Drive, 8th Fl., Chicago, IL 60601 or [cead@chicagoreader.com](mailto:cead@chicagoreader.com)

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1-on-1



## Holiday Party

It was the Thursday before Christmas, and I was invited to a holiday party. I'm not, by nature, a party animal, but I was looking forward to this one. It was being held at Hotel Vermont, from 6 to 10 p.m., and would feature good food and good food. I was scheduled that day for a 3:30 p.m. pickup at Montreal's Trudeau Airport going to Stowe, but the flight—an international arrival from Zurich—came in close to schedule, there would be no problem, right?

My customers were a family of eight, so I would be sharing duties with a cabby colleague of mine — Alenkov from Edinburgh. I knew we'd work fine together; the man has been here since 2006 and is a first-rate cabby. The family we were driving consisted of a couple with six daughters, all under the age of 11 — a half dozen blind angels, all of them adorable. Their family residence is in Switzerland, but the family we were to pick up was from home tucked into the mountains (the man grew up in Stowe), not far from the ski slopes.

Fun fact: The mother the family asked to have a license plate reading "YES FIVE," but once the arrival of their last daughter, they've switched it to "NO SIX." Obviously a couple with flair and a good sense of humor. I'd driven the family a couple times before and got along with the dad. I tip my hat to any cabbie who shares a home with six women, even — or especially — twins.

The plane arrived right on time, and the family climbed out onto a jetty. This was a pleasant surprise, given that (a) there were so darn many of them, and (b) they were traveling with Tim, the family cat. Getting a cabbie through customs can be a

headache. The car-loading process was no small feat, requiring multiple car seats for a top-Trip-family-size squiggle of children. The girls, though, were well behaved, the older ones happily helping the younger.

We were off by 4:30. My cab had Wolfgang riding shotgun and the two oldest girls, Emily and Eve, sitting in the back with Tim and wedged between them, grudgingly concurred in his lanky traveling center.

Straight into Montreal rush hour, I thought, but I should still make it back to Burlington by eight or so, with plenty of time to party hardy.

Except I hadn't taken into account one large, rusty-metal factor: Post Champlain (in English, that would be the Champlain Bridge). It's hard for me to utter the words, in French or English, without sneezing.

When a municipality is strapped for revenue (and more one first sort), it often tries the budget, by delaying infrastructure maintenance. This, of course, is the very definition of penny wise, pound foolish. Postponing routine maintenance — as I don't know, let's say a bridge — inevitably generates far higher repair costs in the future.

The decade-long neglect of Post Champlain is a case study in this dynamic. The bridge is, not to put too fine a point on it, falling apart. A study concluded that bringing it back up to snuff would be more expensive than building a replacement

bridge from scratch. And the cost of that would be — get ready for it — one billion dollars. In the meantime, bridge lanes, often more than one, are continually closed to traffic.

To gain some perspective. About a delay, it should take about a half hour to clear Montreal and cross the Post Champlain. One hour after leaving the airport, we were still on the gridlocked access road leading to the bridge.

Wolfgang is a great guy, as I've said, but with one quirk: He hates being stuck in traffic. He expressed his antipathy by obsessively naming the road and "suggesting" lane changes, like, every six minutes. Under normal circumstances, I would have been more than happy to indulge him (though, wedged in a traffic jam, I have doubts it helps much). But Alenkov was following me, and it would have been a comically difficult for him to maintain our two-man conspiracy if I began changing lanes in this kind of traffic. So this left Wolfgang even more angry.

That's when the real fun started. "Pappa!" Emily the older girl, suddenly shouted. "Oh, my God! There's something wrong with Tim. He just started pooping and there might be blood in it. Oh, poor Tommy I think he is sick."

"Oh, lord," Wolfgang said. "I am so sorry. Is that a normal?" "Pappa, Pappa," said Eve, the younger one, wailing from a rueful sleep.

"I can't stand it! Can't we pull over and clean it out?"

"Girls, I'm so sorry," I explained. "There's no safe place to pull over until we get past the bridge."

"Open your windows?" Wolfgang commanded, lowering his window as the rest of us followed suit. "Brrrrrrrr, can we close the heat?"

"Sure thing," I replied, cranking the fan to high. I was the lucky one. I've always had a terrible sense of smell, and it was working in my favor.

"Oh, no!" Eve said, "I think Tommy is vomiting!"

"No, he's not!" Emily disagreed. "He's got diarrhea!" "Does it really matter, girls?" Wolfgang said. "The point is, we have to bear with it until we can clean it out. The two-hour phone ride probably didn't help the poor guy either."

He didn't make it over Post Champlain for another two hours. After checking in by cell with Alenkov and the rest of the family I turned onto the first well-lit side street to clear Tim's container, along with Tim himself. Grabbing the opportunity to urinate behind a well-placed tree, I noticed that the mom was actually doing, like, 90 percent of the cleanup. Quite the surprise, I noted.

When I finally made it back to B-town, it was close to 11. No party for Jeremy, I thought, allowing myself one big sigh, and then letting it go. ☐

### INFO

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# On Fire

An iconic woodstove maker is bringing manufacturing jobs back to Vermont

BY KEN PICARD | PHOTOS BY JER WALLACE-BRODEUR

**V**ermont Castings' manufacturing plant is a long, narrow, forest-green building along a railroad line on the outskirts of Berlin. On a recent weekday, the facility, in which 125 employees paint, assemble and finish high-end woodstoves and gas grills for shipment worldwide, was lively humming with activity. You could hear it from the parking lot, where two tractor-trailer trucks were backed up to loading docks.

The industrial hustle signals a dramatic turnaround for Vermont Castings, which just last summer was on the brink of bankruptcy and faced a \$103 million debt. Chief Financial Officer Orlando Loria once convinced the company's owner, a private equity firm called the Riverside Company, to write off its obligations, so 43-year-old Loria, along with three others in top management, could purchase the company outright. The entrepreneurial turnaround saved nearly 200 jobs in Vermont.

Today, Vermont Castings is not only in business but largely debt-free. It's also reversing a bitter trend that for decades dominated American durable-goods manufacturing: The company is bringing overseas jobs back to the United States.

Robert Arlison notes the miracle that gave Vermont Castings' woodstoves and grills their smooth and glossy sheen: The 69-year-old Vermont native said the plant is definitely busier than it's been in years. "We've had our rough times in the past," said Arlison. "Hopefully, the economy is turning around and people will buy our higher-end stoves."

Bob Grant, the Berlin plant's general manager, confirmed Arlison's impression of the company's growth—but declined to release any sales figures. Grant, which began with Vermont Castings for 12 years, said his staff was "very nervous" about the company's future before the purchase was announced on July 31. But Loria, now CEO of Vermont Castings Group, has reassured Vermont every month since, as part to inform his employees about where the business is headed. Although top managers for Vermont Castings Group are still based mostly in Paris, Ky.—where the company's two prior owners were headquartered—much of its manufacturing is now back in Vermont.

In fact, Grant added, nearly every owner of his 664,000-square-foot manufacturing floor has been put into production. That's partly because all of the company's grill assembly work, which was previously being done in China and Mexico, has been relocated to Berlin.



Bob Grant looks over an assembly line of woodstoves.

A high-tech laser cutter, which Vermont Castings purchased a few years ago, also enabled the company to bring all of its sheet-metal fabrication back from China. The laser cutter now runs around the clock, producing not only steel stoves but also parts for the grills.

"Between the grills and the stoves, our volume is the highest it's been since I've worked here," Grant added.

Optimism also banters a few miles up Route 12, at the company's foundry in Randolph, one of the last remaining custom foundries in North America and the only one owned by a stove manufacturer. Plant manager Bob Wright, who's been

with Vermont Castings since the foundry was built in 1975, said it is born as "exciting season" for him and his 75 employees.

"I've seen a lot of the cycles the company has been through," Wright said, "but from my point of view, this is one of the best scenarios we've had in quite some time."

According to Wright, the foundry pours about 3,500 molds per day of molten iron into cast-iron products and parts of various shapes and sizes, nearly all of which come from scrap iron recycled from automobile wheels and drums. Some are recast into parts for Vermont Castings' woodstoves. Others are products made for other

companies, such as Lodge, a Tennessee-based cookery firm that sells cast-iron pots and skillets.

Over the years, the Randolph foundry has produced everything from custom stadium seats to sinks, lawnmowers and electric hand dryers.

Vermont Castings sparked a revolution in woodstove designs in the early 1970s. Before then, most were big, sooty inefficient potbelly barons. Today it is found in rural firehouses. The founder of Vermont Castings, Duncan Syme, managed the functional heat source in the clean, efficient, attractive hearths people carry upstairs today.



## BUSINESS



From left: Roger Cook Wright, CEO, and John Wells



A worker removes part from a machine at a mill.

of the industry has been playing catch-up ever since."

Richard Wright, publisher and editor of the industry trade magazine *Heart & Home*, called Vermont Castings "probably the best brand in the industry."

But, like many other companies, Vermont Castings has changed hands numerous times over the years. Some of these owners put profits over product design. As Wright put it, "A brand is like a child. You either take care of it or it goes to hell."

In 2006, Vermont Castings' then-parent company, Massena Hearth Systems, was sold to Riverside. Two years later, the stock market crashed and new housing construction ground to a halt. So, too, did the market for woodstoves, grills and fireplaces.

Although Riverside made a lot of money in the company, Wright said, the timing of its purchase couldn't have been worse.

The hearth industry has been slow to recover. According to Wright, industrywide sales of all hearth appliances—including woodstoves, pellet stoves, gas stoves, fire place inserts and the like—peaked at \$4 million units in 2006. Those sales figures coincided with rising prices for home heating oil, which went from a record low of 40 cents per gallon in February 1999 to a record high of \$4.20 per gallon in July 2004. Wright estimated unit sales of all

hearth products in 2013 will probably clock in at no more than \$300,000 units.

Despite the slow growth in new home construction, the new management team at Vermont Castings Group sounded optimistic when asked recently about the company's sales potential. Reached by phone, Jess Redburn, senior vice president of sales and customer service, said the company is once again refocusing on its signature brands—namely, high-end woodstoves, gas grills and fireplace inserts.

How did Redburn's new boss convince the company's previous owners to write off a \$100 million debt?

"It was actually a good deal for them, too," Redburn said, "because they wanted to walk away with no future liabilities." Part

of the agreement, Redburn explained, was that the new buyer would accept all past and future risks associated with Vermont Castings—financial, product liability, employee and regulatory. Leach's name as CEO afforded him the experience to evaluate the potential sale.

Leach's all-in smooth sailing since the sale was foreshadowed in the months following Leach's purchase; management had to, in Redburn's words, "bring their coats in line" by furloughing 20 jobs in Vermont, Kentucky, Mexico and Canada, mostly at the highest management levels.

of the company that Redburn emphasized that there were no other negative consequences for Vermont Castings' risk-averse workforce, such as cuts in wages, hours or benefits.

In fact, the greatest threat to Vermont Castings may be a regulatory one. This month the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency published its proposed emissions standards for all new woodstoves, pellet stoves, wood-fired furnaces and other residential heaters. According to the EPA, in some cases, such as Korea, N.H., wood combustion in winter contributes more than 30 percent of the daily fine particulate emissions. The EPA estimates compliance could cost manufacturers between \$16 million and \$25 million a year.

"That's going to put a really great hardship on manufacturers," Redburn said, "and our concern is that it's going to put the price of stoves beyond the reach of most consumers."

But Vermont Castings employees like Arken appear to be in for the long haul.

"I bided my time for the three months to see what he was going to do with it," Arken said of Leach's leadership. Arken was committed enough to submit a concerning idea that earned him a \$15 bonus.

Another worker said the new management gave him a five turkey for Thanksgiving and a \$25 gift card from Walmart for Christmas.

"They're back!" That's a new pair of boots," Mike said. "Can't beat that!"

Contact: lea@vermontcastings.com

**A BRAND IS LIKE A CHILD.  
YOU EITHER TAKE  
CARE OF IT OR IT  
GOES TO HELL.**

RICHARD WRIGHT

# HIS BEAT GOES ON

Burlington remembers Andy "A-Dog" Williams BY DAN HOLLES



Andy "A-Dog" Williams, 36, passed away on December 20 following a yearlong battle with leukemia. Most locals knew A-Dog as the area's preeminent turntablist, a phenomenally gifted DJ who was also successful beyond Vermont's borders. He was a fixture in DJ booths around the state, his appearances ranging from holding weekly residencies at Red Square in Burlington to rocking massive parties with nationally touring DJs for the likes of Burton Snowboards and Gravis.

Besides being a mainstay of the music scene, Williams was one of Burlington's most beloved sons, as evidenced by the candlelight walk and vigil held in his honor a few days after his passing. More than 1,050 people turned out on that chilly December night to celebrate his life.

The procession began on the top block of Church Street and meandered down Main Street. It held up traffic as people from all walks of BTV life, most clutching flickering candles, made their way to the waterfront skate park, one of Williams' haunts. There, participants shared stories and laughter and tears. (For more on the vigil, turn to this week's Soundbites column on page 57.)

As an artist, a performer and, most importantly, a friend, Williams made an impact on Burlington that few can claim. How many of us will ever have, by proclamation of the mayor, our own day of tribute? Williams will, on August 30, 2014.

To celebrate his short but brilliant life, Seven Days reached out to some of those lucky enough to have called Williams a friend. What follow are their remembrances. (See also his obituary on page 20.)

## REST IN PEACE, A-DOG.





**Thousands of memories flow through my mind when I reflect upon my beloved moments with Andy Williams**

It seems almost impossible for me to narrow them all down to one. He was and always will be one of the most important people with whom I had the humble honor to cross paths. Andy was more than a friend; he was a brother to me. We would call each other that almost every time we spoke, but we did not use the term in a casual way. We both meant it and new each other as family.

Strength, love, empathy, courage, humor and honesty were some of Andy's greatest strengths. So much I have learned from my brother. So much so many have learned from Andy. His existence shall resonate and echo into eternity.

Our love

ANDY FIDENEL  
FRIEND

I first met Andy in 1995. We ran in the same athletic circle, but it wasn't until he invited for me to the 8-Ball that I really got to know him. What was it about Andy? I was often baffled by his super cunning, chad personality. I was always coming around, always in a hurry. He moved along but with purpose. The longer we had together, the more deeply we understood each other, and the more deeply we bonded and connected. Our talks were about life, money dreams, his mama. He always took care of his mama. As time passed and his outreach grew, Andy started getting invites to travel to 50 and more and more gigs he needed to fly, and I wasn't going to clip his wings. I made sure he could stand all of that!

I watched people die or love with him, and he with them. I would tell him, "Andy,

you got it?" He would ask me, "What's it?" I would smile at him and say, "I don't know what it is, but you've got it." I probably told him that some line a million times. I still don't know what it is, but I know he has it.

I also knew that everybody wanted a piece. He seemed to know everyone, like he had had a personal experience with everyone who came into his sphere. He was always talking, asking questions. And, man, did he have so much style.

**His eyes,  
his smile,  
his radiant love.**  
**No one  
lucky enough  
to have felt it  
will ever forget it.**

We got a call from our web designers — way back, like 1995 or '96 — about the new technology called Flash. They wanted to try it on our site and asked me for a recommendation of an action that they could film. I knew Andy's folks were the most beautiful ones I had ever seen. I remember watching them film him at the parking lot on Cherry Street. He brought it. His outfit was coordinated, his movements were slick and he held his body in a manner that

made you keep an eye on him at all times. He was a natural! Astar.

As life went on we both had bumps in the road, but we were always there for each other without hesitation. Even when he was in fight mode against cancer, he listened and supported me in my battles and struggles. He always had time for the people he loved and for everyone in his path. Oh, that f—ing — the feeling you get when you walked in the club and made eye contact with him on the DJ booth. His eyes, his smile, his radiant love. No one lucky enough to have felt it will ever forget it.

HANNAH DEENE  
TALENT SKATEPARK

I was blessed to be friends with Andy Williams for almost 20 years. When I consider past how long that actually is, I feel so lucky because 20 years is a very long time to learn from someone as caring, compassionate and giving as Andy was.

Andy and I shared a bond over our mutual love of music. The sessions we spent producing records and talking about which record meant the most to them from that "Tribute Called Queen or Queen song simultaneously were like comforters and make-a-ego. Andy's ability to make a person feel his love of life was his gift, yet he made it feel as though it was somehow earned by me.

Saving the chance to experience it with him. Whether you knew Andy by a smile he flashed or you whole skating by you on Bank Street, or if you were as lucky as I or those dancers with him, it all seemed the same to me. He made it seem you were special, you mattered.

Andy's talent as a DJ was world-class. And that's to put the opinion of me, a hip-hop kid from the Green Mountains,

but from other world-class talents such as Z-Trip and Rob 4000. As a DJ who with legends such as those who came through our little state, they expressed their awe with his technique, rhythm and knowledge as a turntableist.

I spent many hours telling Andy that if he had an agent and the right connections, he could easily be on tour with a major hip-hop act. He did what Andy always did: laughed, agreed and picked his crates for Red Square. He liked the fact that he was able to rock for his hometown everywhere. He appreciated it. And as that his talents as a turntable artist paid in comparison to his ability as a first-rate business being.

My last example of how caring and giving Andy was happened a little less than a year ago. A few months after

he had been diagnosed as a gang of us local friends dubbed Friends for Andy, threw a fundraising event to help support Andy's fight. We raised a significant amount of money to help him out and were all very proud. He watched from his hospital room, so we had a direct line of the night sent to him by his family, and we shared tears of joy through texts. A few weeks later, my mom unexpectedly passed away in her sleep. I was devastated and lost, but found solace in a phone call from a hospital room in Boston — it was Andy. Knew with all he was going through he found a way to call me and make how I was holding up.

I will live the rest of my life in honor of how he lived his by being selfless, caring, giving, joyful, appreciative, positive. A true friend.

That was Andy Williams. My dog.

KYLE THOMPSON, ANJA FATTIE B.  
DJ ARTIST, MUSIC JUNKIE FRIEND

## His Beat Goes On by Lisa Schwarzbaum

**A-Dog, the entertainer:** Not only onstage playing those records, but any time you hung out in his house, went skateboarding or traveling, the word always making you laugh or discover something new he was into. But on the same level, you were entertaining him, with your personality, your stories and your own discoveries. It was a two-way street with Andy, equal-opportunities all the time.

The A-Dog stories: Talk about dedication in promoting his work and entertaining the masses! You could count on a new A-Dog mixtape every two months, with an original collage on the cover, track listing, digital download and the whole nine. If you break it down, he's probably

with skate and snowboard anchors and said, "Skate at it?" That is where I'm sure his anchor obsession came from, because he was like a kid in a candy store. He let it go, like, a hundred anchors.

Months later, that same crew moved to Burlington to be closer to the skate, snow, party and DJ culture. At this point Andy was not a DJ per se. He worked at the Sherman and T.A. Mason. His clients to and from work. He scored and scored and beatified to afford one variable — that was plugged into a tape deck. This is where he began to experiment with mixing and making mixtapes for his friends. Later, he would buy a mixer and the second variable.

His chain links his dream job working at the R-Side, surrounding himself in action-

its head for me to remember exactly when I first started hanging with Andy. I need to be a DJ on WBTV from the early to late 1990s. This was before the internet, social media and in the early days before a lot of local venues would even have a hip-hop DJ. Checking out a DJ live was mostly done at house parties. It was literally an underground movement reserved to basement and house parties. Skating and snowboarding were treated sort of the same way. That's what made it so cool, being so far away from major cities, we somehow figured it out and did it ourselves.

I think it was at one of those basement parties that I first met Andy. He was a little younger than me, and I had been DJ'ing for a long time by the time he first started. But I could tell he was definitely the one to

"Help Andy and Jesse [Sourdis, Andy's girlfriend] out right now" mode.

That show at Higher Ground with DJ Z-Trip was gigantic. Z-Trip had performed on the Greenways the night before, then begged on a flight and came over here for Andy the next day. His part has been since that show, and Andy was sweating his last minutes, getting back and forth. It was amazing how many people came out. That was the first time I was able to see how much he had affected so many different people. All types of Burlingtonians came out, including the mayor. Although he did not personally know Andy, Mayor Weinberger was so proud of his guy for coming together to support one of its own.

A couple of days before Andy passed, I reached out to Mayor Weinberger to let



**Andy "A-Dog" Williams will be missed and never forgotten. He was a true legend.**

one of the most "banned" DJs on the planet ever in the decade. It's crazy how many times he put me!

In skateboarding and snowboarding, style plays a really big role, so you tend to gravitate toward the riders who are really good and do it with style. Andy had both of these on lock while riding a board, but his DJ style was no pun. You always tried to get near the DJ booth when he was playing, so you could see the center at work!

**DEAN ELDTT GRAY**  
PHOTOGRAPHER  
BURTON SNOWBOARDS

I met Andy in Burlington in 1986 while skateboarding by the coast on Cherry Street. Andy was with his sis, Athena crew — Mike Day and Mark Wood. They all must have been in or 17 years old. Old enough to drive to Burlington to skateboard for the day. I could tell right away that these guys were having a "coming-of-age moment," especially Andy — his eyes were about to pop out of his head. After our session we turned them back to our apartment on North Willard Street. That apartment was covered with skateboards, snowboards, boots, goggles, etc. I pulled out a shirt box filled

with skate and snowboard anchors and said, "Skate at it?" That is where I'm sure his anchor obsession came from, because he was like a kid in a candy store. He let it go, like, a hundred anchors.

Now it's summer 1996, and the movie *Friday* is super popular with all of us — we watched it here for hours consistently for months. The only VHS tapes we owned were about videos and *Friday*. One day I'm in the R-Side and showing out from the movie to various friends. "What up, dog?" to somebody. "What up, dog?" to another person. I see Andy be head the counter, and it's name begins with an "A."

"What up, A-Dog?" Everybody always wanted to be around Andy because he always had a huge smile and was happy to see you. He was always genuine and wanted to hear how things were going with you. We spent a lot of time together and always gave each other support with our careers and loved to share each other's successes.

We kept in contact every week during his battle with test cancer, and he was completely positive and inspiring the entire time.

**SETH NEARY**  
CREATIVE DIRECTOR, SEVEN STUDIO  
SNOWBOARDING

watch from the new kids. He was, from the very beginning, one of the most talented DJs anywhere. On a personal note, being a minority here in VT, you sort of notice other minorities doing the same thing as you, and maybe that was one of the things that brought us together in the beginning.

Over the years, we stayed connected. I moved out west for a while and moved back to town a little over five years ago. My first gig back was with DJ ZJ and Andy. Andy was one of the ones who encouraged me to get back into it. He was, however, without a doubt, the best DJ in town. From a technical standpoint, his music knowledge, the fact that he'd make his own mixes, edits, etc. The lower how to read a record and always get it rocking. He knew how to make that guy with the underdog request but also kept the girls happy on whatever new pop happened to be, well, pepping.

When I got the news that he was sick, I kind of went into a crash moment. Most of the time I was in the 10 to 15 range of what we could do to help. A few days after Christmas, a bunch of local DJs met up at Starbucks and talked about hosting a few fundraising events. Friends for A-Dog came out of that meeting. We organized, broke into smaller groups focused on various parts, and eventually went into

his house. Andy's health had turned for the worse. The mayor was out west on holiday with his family and sent his condolences. A couple of days later, our friend Dave Driscoll reached out to a few of us and said that he and his sister had contacted the mayor's office and that it had approved establishing an A-Dog Day. There was a very short window of time to draft the proclamation — basically an hour. I pulled over and had my first drive. I prayed for the words to best describe my friend. Forty-five minutes later, I sent that copy in. An hour later a proclamation came back to me.

The next morning I went to pick up the physical copy and was told that the mayor wanted us to read it to the city on his behalf at the vigil for Andy on Church Street. That was a big honor for me. That is my hometown. Andy was one of my good friends and we were going to send him off like the king he was.

The vigil was an amazing experience. We came together in love to celebrate his legacy, and it was one of the most special nights that town has ever known. It was the best party I've been to here in the Queen City. The night we were there, June.

**LUIS CALDERIN**  
BURTON SNOWBOARDS, DJ

I first met Andy Williams later known as Chico and eventually as the infamous A-Dog, when he moved from New Jersey to St. Albans in third grade. We grew up a few blocks from one another in our childhood, we connected through fence-breaking sessions, BMX and freestyle skating, listening to U2 and the Teenie Bop Gang, rocking the first purchase guitar we could find. We formed a group called the "BMX Invaders" and were referred to teach the kindergarten students at City Elementary one craft. This is where our earliest pop, rock, country and blues were dished in, leading toward the OG boom box.

As we grew up, phases changed from blues to skateboards, metal to hip hop. Andy picked up his first musical instru-

I was very fortunate to have spent my younger years as one of Andy's best friends. I met him around 1945 at St. Albans City School, where he was leading BMX handline plays made out of construction paper. Of course, I thought one at a better rate than most of the other kids. I think we ended up making a connection because we both came from single-mother families that always tried their best to give us what they could from what little they had. We started riding bicycle bikes together and staying up late at sleepovers, waiting for "Hushhushhush" to come on MTV. His love for music and art was something he always had.

Then one of our other best friends came into the picture, Bill Dupree, bearing



ment, the electric guitar. He, of course, taught himself and was very good. We transformed from kids to teenagers, taking teenage trips to the S-Store in Burlington, partying in fields with friends. We made skate videos with the high school's AV equipment. Those years were fun, positive and full of exploring.

Andy was a good student and graduated in 1993. I joined the Army at age 17 and Andy saw me off, assuming me everything was going to be OK, as he always did. Four years later, I was reunited with him in Burlington. While living in South Sorens, I became interested in DJing. Andy took me to Eliott & Leonard and introduced me to Eliott & Leonard. He helped me buy my first pair of turntables and showed me the art of the mix.

We spent the rest of our adult years together connecting through music and DJ sessions. I will be forever grateful for Andy Williams, DJ A-Dog. His temper, positivity, kindness and patience and he was always giving. He was the best friend anyone could ever have or want. I am extremely happy to have had him in my life for 20 years. I will carry a piece of him in my heart forever. I love you, Andy.

**JUSTIN RICHARDS  
AKA JUSTIN R.E.H.  
NEXUS ARTISTS**

skateboards and hip-hop tapes. From that day on, the blues and the metal music were just aside.

Soon after, my mother passed away from cancer. And there was no other place I wanted to be but with Andy. His mother took me in with open arms, despite their financial situation. Some of my best memories are late-night sessions with friends in our room. Andy entertaining with two cassette decks and one turntable. We were the type of people who looked up to others and wouldn't give up until we were equals or passed them by.

My stories, just like those of his million other friends, could go on forever. He was just that kind of person. Everyone has a story to tell about him. Andy "DJ A-Dog" Williams will be missed and never forgotten. He was a true legend.

**SENNIS RATHBURN  
CHILDHOOD FRIEND**

#### EXTRA

Scan the QR codes with Layla to listen to A-Dog remixed and watch A-Dog videos.





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# Auto Motivated

Legally blind Charlotte mechanic Edsel Hammond has a feel for car repair

BY MARK DAVIS

**Y**ou won't find Edsel Hammond's garage listed in the yellow pages or advertised anywhere, and you wouldn't know it was there if you passed it. A small sign hanging on the window says "Edsel's Sales and Service" but it faces toward his adjacent house on a quiet Charlotte road.

Most of Hammond's customers are old friends, or friends of old friends, who recommend him to others. Only on rare occasions does he need to greet a customer with a friendly disclaimer, asking if they have heard of his unusual circumstance. He is legally blind, the result of a genetic eye condition that began in his mid-twenties.

## PROFILE

Hammond, now 45, is destined for a life with cars before he was even born. His grandfather owned a gas station. His dad was an auto-body man. Indeed, Hammond has spent his life in close contact with, and his two sons also work as mechanics at a local dealership.

"Motor oil in his life's blood," says childhood friend Darrell Brown.

And about that name? Hammond's parents owned a 1958 Ford Edsel, a short-lived vehicle that would one day make *Time* magazine's list of the 50 worst cars of all time.

Though his first name is Donald, even his parents agreed to, in his more regal and howl-for elementary school as D Edsel Hammond.

"I'm glad they didn't have a Chevrolet," he jokes.

Growing up in Charlotte, young Edsel wasn't much for school, and while most of his buddies talked about girls and sports, he talked cars. In his free time, he would ride dirt bikes or sometimes through farmers' fields or on Mt. Pilot, arriving more than a few landowners and park rangers.

On weekends, Hammond helped his dad at Nerdle Ford (now Fletcher Ford) in South Burlington. A penny pincher, he returned problems he'd brought to a wing, such as a 1968 Mercury Bobcat with a falling sport body and an engine that could barely breathe to life.

"He had a lot of natural mechanical ability. The cars he bought were all terrible junk, and he would get them going and make them last a long time," Brown recalls. "It's not something anybody could do—buy a 1980 car and make it reliable transportation."



Edsel Hammond

During his senior year in high school, Hammond got vocational school credit for working with his dad, and he stayed at the dealership after graduating. He liked the camaraderie and job security, and he liked being able to attend Ford classes outside Brown, where mechanics would be taught about the latest vehicles.

It was the life he wanted, Hammond says, the only one he had contemplated. His average year drops in on his memories.

And then, on a routine afternoon drive in his Ford Bronco, Hammond got something in one of his eyes. In the

moment when he reflexively shut the eye, he noticed something odd. The vision in his other eye seemed to have a gap in it. Over time the gap grew, and eventually Hammond made an appointment with an eye doctor. He was diagnosed with Lister keratoconus, neurodegeneration (L800N), a rare, severe degeneration of retinal cells that affects primarily young men.

Several medicines and treatments failed, and Hammond's vision grew worse.

In April 1993, he went to Johnson for a weekend of road tripping with friends. The following week, he drove himself to

Fletcher Allen hospital in Burlington for a last-ditch procedure. It was the last time he would drive—at least legally.

When Hammond woke up in the hospital the next morning, he saw when the vision in his bad eye had gone white/black, and the other eye was almost as made so.

Some of his sight returned, but the operation was a failure. Hammond's vision in 1994, well past the legal threshold for blindness. Today his peripheral vision resembles the grainy images on an old television, he describes, and his central vision is a "scrambled-up mess."

After several months of recovery, Hammond—who at this point was married and had two young boys—tried to resume his job at the dealership. But he was told the company's manager wouldn't tolerate a blind mechanic working on the premises.

Hammond grabbed his toolbox and left. "It was heart-wrenching," Brown says. "He's such a good person. Edsel was always my personal moral compass... He's the kindest person I've ever known. For something so life altering to happen to someone so good didn't seem fair."

For a while, Hammond worked odd jobs, piecing it together. And he collected disability. But he belonged in a garage. So, with the help of family and friends, Hammond built one next to his house.

In 1995, five years after walking away from the auto business, Hammond opened his own garage in his front yard.

How does he do it?

You might expect this every bad would be bad not in a precise, predictable order but on a recent afternoon, Hammond shelves look as disheveled as those of any other mechanic. His drills are lined up neatly, but small razor blades and nails are scattered everywhere. It's his tools' toolbox, Brown says, looks severely different than it did when he could see.

"Things could be more organized, I guess, but there I wouldn't find anything," Hammond says. "I know where everything is."

But he knows much of his equipment, and cars, by feel. It's hard to tell Hammond is blind until you watch him put his face within inches of a bug not or brake pad.

He occasionally calls out to his sons or a friend for help, and has to pass on some projects involving electrical work—It's tough to differentiate the tangles of wire.

But mostly Hammond works alone, getting by on talent, memory and a willingness to embrace his weaknesses. He has little

problems, for example, crawling around on the gray floor if he drops something. He reads paperwork with the help of a scanner that enlarges print.

On a recent gray afternoon, Hammond is replacing a couple of worn brake pads on a Volvo (Gazdarski: "Gray work," he calls it, as an air compressor coughs to life, allowing him to lay the car into place).

Hammond is wearing brown work pants, brown boots and a worn navy sweatshirt. A tag that once was light blue

Hammond tells his story sitting at a small table in his easy kitchen. A dozen red and white roses sit in a vase on the counter. Just the night before, at a restaurant in Shelburne, Hammond says he proposed to Christina Smith, whom he has dated for 10 years.

Smith, 38, was born and raised in Charlotte, too, and her parents were close with his. Hammond's older sister used to babysit Smith, he says. She was in college when he had kids, but, in an interview later, says she remembers local fund-raisers to send Ed to Japan, where experimental drugs offered false hope of restoring his vision.

Years later, their mothers both urged them to get together. For their first date, Hammond asked her to meet him at his work birthday party at a bowling alley. A few months later, she moved in with Hammond and set about reforming a home that had been the domain of miles. Pillow fighting was banned, and the white walls were painted.

Her friends forget Hammond is visually impaired, Smith says, and young children don't understand why it's important to take their steps off the floor when he comes to visit.

"There's nothing when he says, 'I can't do this because I can't see,'" Smith says, adding, "I wouldn't do well. I don't think I'd have the strength to overcome."

Hammond interrupts: "You get in that situation and you figure out 'Yes'."

At home, remarkably, Hammond is the primary cook. The only time he asks for help is when he can't read the oven temperature or instructions on a food container.

He once mows the lawn with a small tractor, when the light is right, Hammond can keep straight lines by tracking shadows on the taller grass, he explains. And when the light isn't right, he mows crookily and laughs about it.

It's an outlook that even those close to Hammond fail to understand. But he insists that it's as unmodifiable as a regularly scheduled oil change.

"When you have your life set in front of you and then it changes," Hammond says, "you've got to figure something out." □



**YOU GET IN THAT SITUATION AND YOU FIGURE OUT A WAY.**  
EDEL HAMMOND

lags from his back pocket. Behind him, steel light cones are piled in an old drum. Guns & Roses blares from the radio. Vinyls become plates reading "Edel" hung crookedly on the wall. In the adjacent bay are the rusting frames of a 1994 Army Jeep. Hammond is working for a fix.

It would seem a dream life for a man named after a car that Hammond says he would have been happy working for someone else. Still, the advantage of having his own business, he allows, is that he could be home with his boys as they grow up. Hammond and his wife divorced in 2000 and he kept Casey and Brandon, who never hesitate to pitch in at dad's garage.

The worst part about going blind, he offers predictably, was losing the ability to drive. When a miracle to restore his sight, Hammond says he would come directly to me and say a Hurky.

But that's not to say he hasn't been behind the wheel at all in the years immediately after he lost his sight, he admits. Hammond periodically served as the designated driver on nights when his buddies had too much to drink and could do little more than shout directions. They stuck to back roads, and no one was ever hurt, but on those nights the car usually ended up in a ditch somewhere in Charlotte.



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SCAN THIS PAGE  
WITH LAYAR TO WATCH  
A SHORT FILM ABOUT  
EDEL HAMMOND

SEE PAGE 9

# Lightning Strikes

From Merrill Lynch to the Mad River Valley: Win Smith tells a corporate love story

BY PAUL HEINTZ | PHOTOS BY JER WALLACE-BRODEUR

**N**ot until the darkest hours of the 2008 financial crisis did Merrill Lynch's shundering hard-fisted stampede off a cliff. On the Columbus September weekend that saw the collapse of Lehman Brothers, government regulators pulled Bank of America into buying a debt-riddled Merrill for a five-sided price of \$50 billion.

It was an ignominious end to a 94-year-old banking empire, which in its final moments sought to demonstrate the financial-services industry wall made Wall Street more accessible to Main Street.

But in the view of Winthrop H. Smith Jr., the uncle of Merrill's collapse were sown in August 2000 long before the sale. That's when a dot-comer new company president, E. Stanley O'Neal, began replacing the firm's old guard with inexperienced layabouts and dispensing with the company's client-focused traditions, which had long been enshrined in a venerated list of "the Principles."

Smith, a 38-year veteran of Merrill Lynch who now lives in Warren and owns Reganash's Broom, was among the casualties of O'Neal's 2000 purge. And in a new, self-published book, *Catching Lightning in a Bottle: How Merrill Lynch Revolutionized the Financial World*, Smith blames Merrill's downfall on O'Neal's abandonment of the company's culture in favor of profitable but perilous derivatives.

"My feeling was that the firm would at least be more grounded," Smith said last week in the cafeteria of Reganash's Gate House Lodge after taking a bitterly cold run on the mountain he owns. "I never thought it could be brought down, but I knew it was going to be magnified."

To the skeptic, Smith's tale might appear a strange self-serving. As the son of one of the firm's early leaders, he had long been groomed to take over the institution. But in July 2000, the company's board of directors passed over Smith and two other candidates to name O'Neal president, setting him up to become the company's next chief executive officer.

Two months later, when the new boss took over Smith's positions heading Merrill's foreign and its international private client group, the former's her apparent decline a largely ceremonial position and quit the firm. Within a few years of his



Win Smith at Reganash's

## CATCHING LIGHTNING READS MORE LIKE A FAMILY SAGA.

departing, Smith had sold every stock he owned in the company, his father-in-lawed.

As it turns out, Smith was on the right side of history. His indictment of O'Neal, largely ignored during Merrill's turbocharged and highly profitable years of 2005 and 2006, now seems prescient. That O'Neal is widely regarded these days as the villain of the Merrill saga, Smith said, made *Catching Lightning* a rare tape.

"It would have been [difficult to write] probably eight years ago. It isn't new," he said. "I wasn't now because so much had been written about [O'Neal]. I didn't have to tell the news. I didn't have to sound like some gripe. I could, you know, put a little color on it, but everybody knows what he did."

Smith's tone isn't entirely about Merrill's final years—or even about the three decades he spent at the firm. Smith chronicles, in great detail, Merrill's rise

from a scrappy little brokerage house to a world financial power, and he centers his story on the 12 men who led the firm, from the visionary Charles Merrill to his own, underdog father, Winthrop H. Smith Jr., to John Thain, the Goldman Sachs man who presided over Merrill's sale to Bank of America.

Smith knew every one of those men like grew up in the shadow of what its employees referred to as "Mother Merrill," and his corporate history reads more like a family saga. The chairman and CEOs variously come across as a stern grandfather, a respected father, a busy uncle or a neurotic well-meaning.

Thanks to the collaboration of co-author and Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist William E. Kieffer, *Catching Lightning* is infused with meticulous research. Back in 1999, Merrill's communications department hired Eichenberger to write a history of the company, and he put in years of combing through the archives. But O'Neal canceled the project in 2003.

Six years later, after Eichenberger saw a video of Smith delivering a powerful eulogy for the firm at its final shareholders' meeting, the writer reached out to the former executive to propose a joint project. "It was pretty obvious to me that, one, he had a great affection for the company, and, two, he felt it had been seriously damaged by O'Neal. So I gave him a call," Eichenberger said in a phone interview. "I said, 'I think we really ought to do this because I've got all this material, all this background information.'"

For three and a half years, the two drafted chapters and sent them back and forth, editing each other's work. "This isn't a writer, he's a businessman. But as a writer, he's pretty good," Eichenberger said of Smith. "He's a better writer than I am a businessman."

While Eichenberger focused on the company's earlier history, Smith drafted the later chapters chronicling the era in which he played a role. Perhaps as a result of that process, *Catching Lightning* can feel like



## Chugging Along

First Bite: 10 Railroad Street BY ALICE LEVITT

**M**orrisville is not exactly a culinary hotbed. Or rather, it wasn't one. For almost a decade, the Boe's Krause was the only dinner destination on most roadmaps today.

Last summer, that began to change. New arrival: Nate Nissen (wearing striped, attracting distant drinkers, who come not only for the ale but for some of Venice's most creative pub grub). Then, in October, the town's old train station, most recently home to McElroy's Restaurant, reopened as an upscale casual eatery: Co-owner Kim Kaufman calls it Railroad Street a "wayfarer's tavern," with fresh takes on comfort food for dinner and from-scratch sandwiches or lunch.

Owners Kaufman and Jim Cooksmith burst onto the Morrisville dining scene after a false start in Stowe less than a year before. Already the owners of the Blue Dining, they plopped down \$1.5 million to take ownership of their former Mountain Road neighbor, the Rusty Nail. The deal disintegrated after the previous owner turned out to owe the town \$250,000 in back taxes. Stowe also had a lien on the property for unpaid sewer fees.

While controversy has been no stranger to the formerly New York City-based restaurateurs, they've given Mariaville a thoroughly comfortable restaurant experience. On a cold night last week, 10 Railroad Street was an oasis, even when the servers weren't scotch on track.

Our server, What, seemed genuinely excited to seat us. Once he learned we were from Burlington, he spent the meal sharing us up about Chatham County restaurants.

The restaurant's wide-open spaces are heavily decorated with a train theme, including array black-and-white photos of stations and cars hanging from the exposed brick walls. In the hallway that leads to the bathroom, a new road sign gives way to a person-size truck, down which I couldn't just choose.

The serum likewise enhances the radiolabel uptake with antibodies labeled



18424

**BAD CASSOULET MAKES ALICE AN ANGRY GIRL,  
BUT A GOOD PUREE CAN CHEER HER UP.**

"Boarding Passes" and "The Wrong Car," and coffee drinks named for famous authors.

We ordered our apple from the "Modern Platters" section. The Karussell Stollen looked like a sophisticated martini for a grown-up, but don't let your title near the thing. The combination of Stollen, Sekt and Karussell and Prunzles would ram these into hapless alcoholics before they reached double digits. Given that the drink

rounded out of class. **Liquid Nitro II**, it might have been a better release for Desert.

Not that I had any major complaints about pairing the cocktail with the contents of the basket that emerged gradually after we ordered. Lined with the comedy newspaper many restaurants use for fish and chips, it contained not bread but the Blue Donkey's signature fried-onion Donkey chips. The hot, ultra-thin chips were a well-seasoned surprise, but

most of them suffered from a slight burnt taste.

When I interviewed Kaufman just before the opening of 10 Railroad, she described the restaurant as an opportunity for Elia Donley chef Kenan Melender to show off his more creative side. Located in New York and Seattle fine-dining restaurants, the speech asked was indeed a showcase for Melender's talents, as well as a refreshing palate cleanser after the chips.

TABLE 1. *Continued*



More food after the classifieds section.

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# SIDEdishes

BY CORIN HIRSCH &amp; ALICE LEVITT

## Breakfast, Lunch, History

WINDSOR DINER IS OPENING WITH NEW COFFEE.

In its 68th year, this warmest South New England place long occupied by the **PARSONS DINER**. In September, a little under forced door nudged all **HAMMERS** to close his 5-year-old Arcade Diner there. But since last last month, the Windsor Lunch Car has been as busy as ever even so.

That's thanks to new owner **CORIN HIRSCH**, who has re-named the Parkway Diner to name.

multiple syrup. Goodfried means more in-house for hot and cold lunch sandwiches. "You pull the turkey out to temp it, and there's a big whiff of turkey instead of just one thing perched," he says, describing the old-fashioned menu of his efforts.

Traditional sandwiches are joined by barbecue waffles, while the burgers include a black-bean patty and a beef burger with cheddar, bacon and apples. Goodfried says he plans to keep his menu small to allow for fresh sausage each day and other specialties.

## Franklin County Fare

NEW TASTING EVENT IN ST. ALBANS

Franklin County farmers and producers don't always get the media love that, say, Caledonia County does. But the northwest corner of Vermont is working hard, too.

So this time, executive director of the **FRANKLIN COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION** decided to do something about it. On January 24, the local businesses and associations that make up the new's diversified agriculture will introduce **WINDSOR TASTE**, an event dedicated to promoting the region's food.

The event takes place from 5 to 8 p.m. at St. Albans City Hall. According to **WINDSOR TASTE**, an event dedicated to promoting the region's food.

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Franklin County's culinary culture is "There's no better place to chat therapy and try their treats."

## Misery Loves Croissants

WINDSOR DINNER TO OPEN A WINDSOR MALLSHIRE.

It's been about a year since the start of the Windsor Caphilary used to operate. Now the people from a really interesting life as a bakery and community.

The rocks will start filling at 18 Windsor Falls Way by late January or early February when **WILE BAKING** opens its doors, says **MILC** co-owner **LARNA WILE**. She sounds happy to fast MLC's baking muscles just a month's travel from its existing restaurant at 44 Main Street. "We were doing our own riffs" and other things at the restaurant Wile says, but space was a premium. "This was the last straw."

The bakery will sell croissants, burlberries and MLC's popular lemon-meringue doughnuts, as well as an array of to-be-determined baked goods. "We haven't really gotten that far into planning" the menu, says Wile, as she and chef-partner **ARON JOURNEY** and **WINDSOR WILE** are writing on the necessary equipment.

One thing they know for sure: MLC Bakery will offer guests from Portland-based Strawberry Carlin Biscuits and have a few tables inside, plus places to sit on the sidewalk during the summer. "It's definitely not going to be a place around all day" of food, but more of a quick stopover," says Larina Wile, for people to grab coffee, bread and garnish to go.

Besides having the bakery, the new space will serve as a community for a neighborhood MLC culture arm. Does that mean Big Red, the company's food truck, will be playing the streets of Burlington again soon? One can dream.



New York's Goodfried sandwiches

The Colchester native says he's a lifelong diner aficionado who frequented non-closed 100th's Blue Line Diner since he was a kid. Following 30 years in the kitchen at Diner's, Goodfried worked his way through the kitchen of Magdine's Chermoula and Franklin County Diner, as well as of **WINDSOR ALLAN WINDSOR DINE**, where he learned to add a local touch to his comfort cuisine. "I've got about 38 years involved in breakfast-lunch-dinner situations," says the young cook. "We care about what we do."

For now, the Parkway Diner is open seven days a week from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m., though Goodfried says he may soon drop Monday. Breakfast is served all day and includes all the basics, such as fluffy protein and cinnamon French toast, both served with real

On New Year's Day, a Parkway special breakfast sandwich consisted of an egg and deep-fried pork to order, topped with cheddar. Halfhearted mutton on a cheese cheddar bun. Goodfried says he'll be surprising with different versions of that dish, along with other slightly quirky takes on classic diner offerings.

As the season progresses, he hopes to begin introducing more local ingredients beside the maple, eggs and dairy he currently serves. Those may include: veggie from a friend's organic farm in the Champlain Islands.

With Goodfried at the helm, the Parkway Diner is 61 years old and still learning new tricks.

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## Chugging Along BY P.J.

The secret was toasting the greens with shaved fennel in lightly creamy orange vinaigrette. Though a winter dish at its core, the salad was like a white coat worn to the cold months — nontraditional and full of life. I liked the richness of thinly sliced, house-cured salmon, but the dish would have been just as good without it.

Melander clearly has a way with tricky dressings. The basic Railroad Salad was flavored with raspberry vinaigrette, neither too sweet nor too tangy.

I sampled that vinaigrette on a side salad accompanying the classic macaroni and cheese. I am more than ready for the mac-and-cheese-to-meat trend to be dead and buried, but since four different iterations (including one with lobster and tiger shrimp) occupy their own section of the 10 Railroad menu, I figured I had to try one.

Beyond the melange I experience when I consume a dish with so little variety, my biggest problem with most macaroni-and-cheese offerings is that restaurants tend to serve them up too dry. Thankfully that was not the case at 10 Railroad. The dinner guests had plenty of creamy sauce, whose not-too-sharp character reminded me of a restaurant in town of Kirk Mountain & Cheese. That was a dig. With a shower of herbs and bread crumbs, the dish was a well-executed effort in every sense of the word equivalent of Proser's madeleine.

Melander would probably have shared my excitement at trying the next course. On 10 Railroad's original menu, a rabbit consomme called to me. The protein had changed to duck by the time I arrived, but I can't argue with the choice unless their execution leaves something to be desired. This one did.

The Académie Universelle du Cordonist promotes many different takes on the basic French hen consomme, but I imagine the group's members would first spring into the undercooked (still in my case more than a little bit done) when heated that formed the base of this dish. The heating liquid was heavy with garlic and definitely compared the French countryside in its own way, but the stew needed more character. There were only two choices of sausage mixed in with the leekines. None of the same, or of either same, would have helped.

But the duck leg that rested in the center of the gigantic bowl was the saddest part of all. Rather than being presented as a traditional confit, the goose-tasting bowl was underseasoned and undercooked. As I got closer to the base, it was nearly raw and exceedingly tough.

Had consomme makes sense as an entry, but a good piece can cheer her up. The menu's description of the



Grilled pork chops

butter-mashed squash mash that came alongside the grilled pork loin was my primary reason for ordering that course. I made the right choice.

The squash smelted strongly of their ginger oven before the plate hit the table. In my mouth, vanilla bloomed along with the spicy root and the sweet sausage. When I swallowed it, a ginger burn remained at the back of my throat. For Melander, this dish was a risk that paid off admirably.

The rest of the dish was well-made, too. A pair of grilled pork chops tasted of flame but remained juicy. Green

beans were lemon-kissed and cooked to crisp perfection.

In this case, my advice to the restaurateur would be to offer less on the plate. The \$19 entrée was composed of two plates of food, each topped with a pork chop. When I had the second set for dinner the following night, the combination made a filling request on its own. It would be nice to be able to order half the dish for half the price.

The same could be said of the consomme. After our dinner in Montclair, my dining partner saw the dish again over the course of two lunches. At \$21, that was a great value, but diners might appreciate the option of more reasonable portions at a lower cost.

The star here was reserved with dessert. I don't usually expect to pay \$10 for a sweet unless it's prepared by someone named Payard or Torrisi. All right, that's an exaggeration, but I was still surprised at the price-to-size ratio of my deconstructed crème.

I give big points to the chef for making every element of the dessert from scratch, but not all succeeded. The honey chocolate cake on one side of the rectangular plate couldn't seem to decide whether it wanted to be less cake or simply a crisp-edged flourish one. I loved the braised rumchikoff that topped it, but the house-made granola crumbled on top of that was overly thick and hard to bite through. The plate's greatest asset was a scoop of chocolate ice cream. Though it wasn't as richly dark as I might have liked, the texture was delectably creamy, and that nugget of chocolate sauce

added depth to the flavor.

Montclair is a beautiful day from Burlington, so I may not be headbanging immediately, but 10 Railroad will be on my short list when I'm in the area. And for diners in Lenville County who want to avoid the stress tourist traps, it will probably chug along as their regular rotation. ☐

### INFO

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Ingredients for making bitters and vermouths

# Cabin-Fever Drinks

Use your next snow day to make bitters, infused wine or vermouth

BY CORIN HIRSCH

**W**hen winter settles in, our homesy, DIY tendencies can emerge: hosting bars, scrapping, organizing those kitchen shelves on Flickr or ... making vermouth?

It may not be the most traditional of crafts, but rendering your own infused wines, syrups and bitters is immensely rewarding. If the prospect sounds daunting, it shouldn't. Bitters and vermouths may seem like exotic cocktail ingredients, and they can add beguiling complexity to cocktails, but they're fairly straightforward to make. That is, once you're armed with bottles, wine or rye, bottles and an assortment of herbs, fruit peels, herbs, dried fruit and seeds that you can pick up at most natural foods and herb stores.

The most easily ingredient is patience. Bitters require weeks to mature, and it takes months to realize the flavors of vine de mason — or home-infused wines. Yet, if

you get to work now, by the time the blues bloom, you'll be ready to smooth bottles you sipped away during winter's long nights. Then you can pour a glass, fill a plate with peas and only chives and toast to your forgoth (and the bitters weather).

If you can't wait that long, some of the elixirs distilled here make for the perfect winter drink, a Manhattan. So get cracking.

## Bitters

For early Americans, "taking some bitters" was a daily morning ritual. Within reach of the breakfast table were top vials of house — often Madeira, rum or brandy — infused with such "medicinal" ingredients as juniper berries, mint, dried orange peel, ginger, black berries and rosemary. These elixirs were believed to stimulate the digestive system, among other organs, and often had entertaining names — whiskey skin, figuette and timber dapple along down.

Bitters' fortunes have risen and fallen with the decades, but they're currently undergoing a full-on revival, with dozens of brands having hit the market in the past few years. Once you begin using bitters in your cocktails, you may get addicted to snapping up unusual bottles made with flavors such as rhubarb and celery.

It's just as easy, and cheaper, to make bitters at home, and their versatility makes them a blank canvas onto which you can project your wildest flavor fantasies. No early my botanical, dried or fresh fruit or herb can be considered: lemon, orange, rose, mint, hibiscus, dandelion. The only other things you need are alcohol and a tried-and-true bottle. Steep your chosen ingredients in alcohol for a few weeks, and they're good to go.

My personal darling of the moment is Woodford Reserve Special Cherry Bitters, so I decided to make my own version. But I added a favorite spice: cardamom. While

some recipes call for dividing your ingredients into layers before blending — the flavoring agent (such as peach leaves or rhubarb), the spice element (such as cinnamon or pepper) and the bittering agent (usually gentian or wormwood), this method is easier for the novice — including me.

## Cherry-Cardamom Bitters

- 1/2 cup dried cherries
- 1/4 teaspoon dried orange peel
- 1/4 teaspoon cardamom
- 1/4 teaspoon black peppercorns
- 1/2 vanilla bean
- 2 cloves
- 1 teaspoon gentian (This can be hard to find. Try Woodcock's Purple Hooter Herbs, or substitute milk thistle or dandelion.)
- 1 cup rye whiskey

Put cherries and other dry ingredients into a tall jar, then top with rye. Shake to

blend and store in a cool, dark place for two weeks, shaking once daily. Decant into tinted stopper bottles. Bitters will keep for up to a year, and do not need to be refrigerated.

### Home-Infused Wine (Vin de Maison)

The spiritist tradition may be more pervasive in France than in the U.S., but the before-dinner ritual of sipping a light, refreshing liquor — such as *Pastis* — with cubed meat or cheese deserves to be enjoyed everywhere. If you're around aperitifs in a French home, they might include a *vin de maison*, or a home-made wine that has been infused with anything from young peach leaves (*vin de pêche*) to green verbena (*vin de menthe*) to eucalyptus leaves (*vin de eucalyptus*).

Most of these leaves and fruits are distant relatives in the depths of winter. Just when the key to making a *vin de maison* is nothing it away in a dark place for months to develop its flavor, the time is right to make *vin de orange*, or rose wine left to macerate with orange peel and spices until it becomes a spicy-sweet, refreshing liquor.

*Vin de orange* is traditionally made with bitter Seville oranges, but given the difficulty of finding these, sweet oranges are a decent substitute. Combine their peels and parts with a bottle of dry rosé, vanilla, cinnamon and sugar and let the mixture sit for 40 days. You'll be rewarded with a drink that's been a staple of the early evening in France for centuries.

#### Vin d'Orange

- 1 750-milliliter bottle of dry rose wine (a Provencal is perfect)
- 4 oranges
- 1 vanilla bean
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 3/4 cup sugar
- One wide-mouthed glass container
- Self-cooking bottle

Pre-heat oven to 200 degrees. Preheat Peel two of the oranges, removing the white pith, and dry peel in the oven for one hour. Press juice from the two peeled oranges, then eat the remaining two into wedges.

Combine wine, peels, juice, wedges, vanilla bean, cinnamon and sugar in a large glass jar, cover and put in a cool, dark place. Shake once every day for about a week until sugar dissolves. After 40 days, strain the wine through strainer into a nonreactive container and discard solids. Decant wine into a self-cooking bottle, label with the date and stash away again for two or three months. Once opened, the *vin de orange* will keep in the refrigerator for up to a year.

## THE MOST COSTLY INGREDIENT IS PATIENCE. BITTERS REQUIRE WEEKS TO MATURE, AND IT TAKES MONTHS TO REALIZE THE FLAVORS OF VINS DE MAISON.

### Vermouth

If the only vermouth you've ever tasted is labeled Martini & Rossi, you're missing out on a world of seductive flavors. While cheap vermouth is suitable for basic martinis and Negronis, hand-crafted, artisanal vermouth can bring those same drinks to better heights.

What is vermouth, exactly? Wine that's been fortified with a hard spirit and flavored with herbs, spices and roots, sometimes as direct as marjoram. Sweet vermouth is often red-colored, with luscious, spicy, sometimes figgy notes —

a tasty winter apple when served over ice. Dry vermouth is lighter and more savory, offering subtle hints of herbs and berries.

Vermouth makers often jealously guard their recipes, but sweet start with white wine and a bittering agent such as wormwood. While wormwood can be hard to find locally — some herb stores have it both dried and in tincture — assai can be used as a substitute. (Used the following recipe to render what should have been sweet vermouth, but the end product's ashy flavors fall between sweet and dry. One of the many virtues of vermouth is that you can experiment with each new batch — try your own combination of peels, spices and dried herbs.)

#### Sweet Vermouth

- 1/2 cup granulated white sugar
- 1/2 cup turbinado sugar
- 1/2 cup plus 2 teaspoons water
- 1 750-milliliter bottle dry white wine (I used Pinot de Pinot, but Pinot Grigio or Trebbiano will do)
- 1/4 teaspoon wormwood leaf, or a dash of wormwood tincture
- 1 teaspoon cardamom seed
- 1/2 teaspoon dried orange peel
- 1 vanilla pod
- Pinch of dried bay leaves
- Pinch of cinnamon leaves
- Pinch of white peppercorns
- Pinch of dried orange
- Pinch of dried ginger
- Pinch of fennel seeds
- 1/2 cup sherry
- 1/2 cup brandy

In a saucepan, heat sugar and 2 teaspoons of water over low heat, stirring constantly, until the mixture begins to turn brown and caramelize, about five minutes. Remove from heat and let cool to 160°F.

Heat 1 cup of the wine into a saucepan, add all spices and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for five minutes, then remove from heat. Once cool, strain the infused wine through muslin to remove solids, squeezing to extract the flavors. Discard solids.

Heat 1/2 cup water in a saucepan and slowly spoon in caramelized sugar, stirring until incorporated into a single syrup.

Combine infused wine, remaining wine from bottle, sugar syrup, sherry and brandy in a self-cooking glass bottle. Turn over several times to combine, then label and refrigerate. Vermouth is ready to consume once combined, but its flavors will improve with time. Sweet vermouth will keep for up to a year in the refrigerator. ☺





JAN 9-11 THEATER

# Sparks Fly

**R**ichard Klovdahl is much more than the title of his one-man show. *Just a Welder* suggests. He's also an actor and author of the essay collection *Hardhat Liberal*, which romances blue-collar philosophy. Klovdahl has met a colorful cast of characters during some 30 years of traveling between construction sites from Alaska to Puerto Rico to California to Vermont—where he now makes his home in Brimlow. These comedians and coworkers inspire hilarious onstage anecdotes. In a comedic and sometimes political performance, Klovdahl grants audience members access to a trade where the smallest details command the greatest attention.

## JUST A WELDER

Thursday, January 9 | Saturday, January 11 | 7:30 p.m. at Kelly Rogers Theater in Waterville | 202-140-5823 | [www.kellyrogers.com](http://www.kellyrogers.com)



JAN 13 | WORDS

## Food for Thought

For Abigail Carroll, the adage "You are what you eat" refers not just to food but the how, when and where of mealtime traditions. In her book *Three Squares: The Invention of the American Meal*, the local writer considers the intricate relationship of breakfast, lunch and dinner. Asserting that "the shape of a meal is also the shape of society," Carroll examines the evolution of daily eating rituals from colonial times to the present. Identifying influences such as the Industrial Revolution and the advent of processed foods and smoking culture, Carroll illustrates why knowledge of the culinary past is key to understanding its future.

## ABIGAIL CARROLL

Monday, January 13 | 7 p.m. at Greenleaf Library in East Junction, Pa. | Info: 878-9322 | [three-squares.com](http://three-squares.com)

PHOTO COURTESY OF KELLY ROGERS

BY LUCY H. KELLY

THIRD PAGE

CHRONICLE





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CONCLUSIONS













# Capital Cajun

Spice on Snow festival brings Louisiana heat to chilly Montpelier

BY GARY MILLER



Depending on your perspective, January in Vermont might represent a climatic blessing that enables a glorious month of recreational adventure, or a hellish, relentless beast that grips you in its jaws for all of the most miserable days of the year. Either way, you might want to consider a visit to Montpelier this weekend, where the Summit School of Traditional Music and Culture's Spice on Snow festival offers a musical—and gustatory—respite from winter's coldest month.

Spice on Snow is the fourth annual mid-winter festival for the Summit School. Since its inception in 2011, the event has doubled from two to four days, and expanded from a music date of all-local performers to one drawing nationally known players for a series of concerts and interactive instructional workshops.

This year's headliners include the Revelers, a Lafayette, La., Cajun ensemble featured on HBO's post-Katrina epic series "Treme"—and Anthony Bonanni's "No Reservations." They'll hit Montpelier Town Hall on Friday, January 10, for a Cajun dinner, concert and dance.

Sharing top billing is Bruce Molyne, a legendary old-time fiddler who has been nominated for two Grammys and whose David Arner — no slouch in the string section himself—calls "the Harbinger of Appalachian fiddle." Molyne will perform Saturday, January 11, at Bethany Church in downtown Montpelier.

Other musical guests include Blues, NY-based old-time musicians Racha Simons and Bone Newton, and Vermont's venerable old-time master Pete Sutherland, who'll be playing the fiddle, fiddle with Trinke Chalk and Friends. Spice on Snow also offers free folk-themed shows with local groups Good Old Wagon, the Zeicher Family Band and the Turning Stone.

The Cajun theme pervading the festival has its roots in the musical explorations of Summit School founder and second member, Rick Truitt, who's been traveling to Louisiana for the past two years to perform, first with the Kick 'em Down String Band and then with Montpelier's own Jay Ellis.

Truitt describes her adventures, which center on Lafayette's Blackout Festival, as an immersive learning experience. And

during her time there, she's befriended a number of Cajun musicians, including members of the Revelers.

Reached by phone at the Ashokan Music and Dance Camp in the Catskills, where he's teaching at an annual New Year's workshop, Revelers' bandleader Eric Frey seemed quite pleased to be making the journey to Montpelier, despite its northern locale. When informed of the current weather conditions, he chuckled.

"People say 'that you aren't used to this kind of weather down in Louisiana!' but every year we come upland do some sort of winter tour, so we are pretty accustomed to it," said Frey. And, he added, it's easy to get warmed up at a Cajun performance, because Cajun is about participation.

"It's a very social music," continued Frey, who grew up in a musical family in Louisiana and started picking bluegrass guitar at age 4. "Whether you are going into the mix and playing some tunes with everybody or participating by dancing, or just hanging out at the bar drinking a beer and having a good time," he said, "it's not the kind of music you want to sit around and just watch."

Those who don't know any Cajun dance steps needn't worry. The Revelers regularly travel with dance instructor Gerry Barbo, who'll be offering free lessons just before the band's Town Hall show. And, according to Frey, there's a side benefit to learning the steps: "Once you can dance to Cajun, you can dance to anything."

In addition to the free dance class, Spice on Snow includes more than a dozen 90-minute workshops in Cajun, Zydeco, country and old-time music, at a cost of \$10 to \$25 each. Offerings include old-time fiddle and banjo, Cajun/Zydeco accordion, harmony singing, Cajun guitar and a more in-depth class on blues, from physics to musical virtuosity, is invited to participate.

At most traditional Cajun events, music is only part of the picture and the role of food can't be overstated. In fact, the menu for the Blackout Festival comes from custom

cooks who used to simmer up a good gumbo. Spice on Snow will bring the heat to the kitchen courtesy of Lafayette chef Toby Rodriguez and Montpelier's New England Culinary Institute.

Rodriguez, who has appeared on "No Reservations" and "America's Top Chef," has taught the experience of Cajun cooking as far north as Alaska. And when he visits Montpelier for Spice on Snow, he plans on going at it whole hog in a series of what he calls "extremely hands-on" cooking workshops.

On Friday morning, Rodriguez will lead a class in South Louisiana whole-hog butchering at NECC's College Street kitchen. He'll follow it up on the afternoon with a class on cooking traditional neck-home stew. That dish will form the centerpiece of a Town Hall meal preceding the Revelers concert.

On Saturday at NECC's School Street kitchen, Rodriguez will work with students to make Cajun sausage and smoked meats. Later that day, he'll collaborate with students on boudin and lug sauce. The products of these classes will be served at a dinner before Eric Molyne's Saturday night concert and in a five-course lunch Sunday morning at Three Broom Dipsom.

Rodriguez, a sculptor and furniture maker who has never intended to be a chef, emphasizes that if you cook or eat at Spice on

Snow, you'll learn the difference between serious Cajun food and the real thing. Most people, he says, equate Cajun with one type of spicy food. But they couldn't be more wrong. "It's a whole array of spices that go into it," Rodriguez says. With that, he might well be describing not only Cajun cooking but the Spice on Snow festival itself. ☐

ONCE YOU CAN  
DANCE TO CAJUN,  
YOU CAN DANCE  
TO ANYTHING.  
ERIC FREY, BANDLEADER,  
THE REVELERS

## INFO

For more on the Spice on Snow festival (including scheduling and ticket info), visit [summitschool.com](http://summitschool.com). See calendar page 78.



# SOUNDbites

BY DAN BOLLES



Photo by A. Dan Bolles

## In Memory of A-Dog

It was an outpouring typically reserved for the passing of the loved heads of state, or maybe a religious figure. But I suppose in Burlington, that's exactly what it was: the loss of a saint.

On Saturday, December 28, people from nearly every walk of Burlington life gathered on the top block of Church Street to mourn the passing and celebrate the life of **ANDY A-DOG WILLIAMS** who had died two days earlier after a yearlong fight against leukemia. It was just about the most beautiful thing I've ever witnessed.

If you are connected to Burlington in any way, you know that the D's death struck a profound chord within the community. Just at 38, he was far too young to leave us. It was never a fair fight, though Williams would have been the last to say so. As his longtime girlfriend, **JANE FUCHSOWITZ GOSWAMI**, told me in a recent phone call, throughout his illness Andy never complained or sought sympathy.

"He would have had every right to say, 'Why not?' also said "But he never, ever did."

That's just how he was wired. I met Andy shortly after I started working at *Seven Days* in 2000. In 2006, his Burlington apartment was destroyed in a fire. Some far a couple of houses of neighbors and some records, he lost virtually everything he owned. Andy came down to the TD office to talk about it. Or so I thought.

We sat outside on a bench. We spoke for maybe five minutes about the fire and an upcoming benefit concert. We spent the next hour talking about music and our families. Before he left, he handed me a stack of records he had made. I still have them.

It was a special gesture to me. That if you know him, even just a little as I did, the gesture was hardly unusual.

**live culture**  
VERMONT ARTS NEWS + VIEWS

Art world came to find out, Andy was notoriously generous with gifts, whether it was Christmas fair finds, promo gear for the dudes at the record shop from parties he played or, best of all, a smile and nod from behind the turntables for, well, just about everyone he was known to like that.

When he was diagnosed with leukemia in December 2012, even knowing how grave his disease was, Andy seemed to convey a sense that he would beat it. How could he not? This was a man who came from virtually nothing, a skinny kid raised by a single mother in a tiny white, blue-collar Vermont town who made himself into one of the finest and most respected DJs in Vermont, if not the entire country. Ask around, it's true.

It's hard to comprehend just how long those odds were. Maybe about as immense as the chances of finding a home marrow donor who matched his multi-ethnic genetic makeup. But Andy beat those odds, too—twice, in fact, as two matching donors were found in the span of a week. We always thought he'd find a way to beat cancer, too. Because how could he not?

About a week before he passed away, Andy's doctors at the Dana Farber Institute in Boston informed him that his chemotherapy has been more successful surgery—including infection and a lung fungus—had progressed beyond the point of treatment. The fight was over.

"I'd be had more days to live, Andy looked each of that doctors in the eye and said a remarkable thing: Thank you."

"He shook their hands and thanked them for all they had done," said Jane. "Who does that?"

Andy passed away early on the morning of Thursday, December 26, at the Purcell's Senior Life House in Lincoln, Vt. It was uncertain whether he could even make the trip home from Boston. But again, Andy defied the odds.

SOUNDBITES BY DAN BOLLES

For up to the minute news about the local music scene, follow @localculture on Twitter or read the Live Culture blog [sevendaystv.com/theculture](http://sevendaystv.com/theculture).

## HIGHER GROUND

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## WED. 08

## burlington area

**CLUB METRONOME:** Curiouser Curiouser! 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. (ages 18+)

**FRANKY'S:** 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. (ages 18+)

**HAWKSWING:** Sound of Music with Old Time Music! 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**J.P.'S BAR:** Pub Quiz with Dave [DJed] 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. (ages 18+)

**JAN-FLEX AT METRO VERMONT:** Post-Rock 7 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**LELAND'S BISTRO & CAFE:** Blue Martin and Scott Cox [Live w/ DJ] 7 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**MANHATTAN PIZZA & PUB:** Open Mic with Andy Latta 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**MURPHY HOUSE:** Whiskey Wednesday! 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. (ages 18+)

**NECTAR:** 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. (ages 18+)

**ON TAP BAR & GRILL:** Open Mic with John Lusk 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**RADIO BEAN:** Open Mic (ages 18+)

**RED SQUARE:** Open Mic 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**SUNNY PANCAKE:** Open Mic 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**THE BOTTLE:** Open Mic 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

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PHOTO: SETH BLY THE LUCKY JULIEN BROS. (JULIEN BROS.)

## Euphonistic Expression

Armed with all manner of percussive instruments, strings and horns—including, delightfully enough, a euphonium—Albany, NY's **THE LUCKY JULIEN BROS.** trade in a genre-stomping style that owes as much to American songwriting traditions as to New Orleans performance. On, as they like to call it, "a rock-and-roll circus." The band plays a pair of Vermont dates this week: Friday, January 10, in Charlie O's World Jambou in Montpelier, and Saturday, January 11, at Radio Bean in Burlington.

## regional

**MONTEPELIER:** 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

## THU. 09

## burlington area

**GOVIA TBA:** 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**FRANKY'S:** 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**HAWKSWING:** 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**MANHATTAN PIZZA & PUB:** 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**MURPHY HOUSE:** 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**NECTAR:** 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**ON TAP BAR & GRILL:** 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**RADIO BEAN:** 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**RED SQUARE:** 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**SUNNY PANCAKE:** 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

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**ON TAP BAR & GRILL:** 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

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# SOUNDbites

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37



He hung on long enough for his closest friends to visit him on his deathbed and say good-bye. He died peacefully, and, as Joe, "He was surrounded by love."

In Burlington, Andy's passing sparked a phenomenon. For days, the Facebook and Twitter feeds of Burlingtonians near and far were filled with pictures and music and videos of and for DJ A Dog. In the Queen City, the number of posts mourning Andy's death likely surpassed those about Nelson Mandela's passing week before.

And so we gathered on a chilly night in late December. Contrary to one media report, there were not "dozens" of us. There were not hundreds. The mass of people huddled together, faithfully trying to keep our candles lit against the breeze at the top block of Church Street, easily numbered more than 1,000. We listened as Joe briefly addressed the crowd, shaking back tears and thanking us for being there — as if we'd be anywhere else. We listened as Lari Caldarin, an old friend and musical colleague who had helped spearhead numerous benefit shows under the Friends for A Dog banner, informed us that Mayor Weinberger

had proclaimed August 30, 2015, to be Andy Williams Day in Burlington. Then someone blasted out the boom box.

Led by our hip-hop grad paper, we walked down the Marketplace, slowly and in masses. But it was hardly another Streets of "AaaaA Dog" could be heard for blacks in any direction. As we passed Kod Square, DJ A Dog's home away from home, cheers went up as beats flooded from the empty bar into the street.

We were told that the procession would continue down Main Street. And it did. Rather than navigate icy sidewalks, we spilled into the street, wading 30 and 42 abreast and gleefully disrupting traffic as we made our way down the hill. The front of the procession stopped briefly at the BC10 Center on the waterfront. When I looked back, a line of flickering lights could be seen, stretching to the Sizzay Pancake, behind the Burlington Bay Market, past Main Street Landing and up Main Street, where it disappeared from view, but still continued for blocks.

We continued at the waterfront skate park. After placing our candles in a snowbank outside the entrance, we filed

into the park by the ramps. A hot-air lantern was lit and released, briefly agonizing through a set of power lines before floating into the overcast sky and disappearing in the clouds. Then another took flight.

What followed was a series of changes to a fellow friend, stories from fellow DJs, snowboarders, skaters and neighbors that were by turns teasing, hilarious and heart-breaking. Later that night, tributes abounded in and around Burlington. Partic B, and crew reprised their roles rapping with the **SHIMMY PANCAKE** band at Nectar's. There was a quiet moment at a rock show at the Monkey House in which **SHIMMY PANCAKE** front man **MATT PERRY** asked us to raise a glass. There were undoubtedly countless other smaller and more private benevolent thoughts at the Queen City and beyond that night.

When someone dies, we tend to emphasize the departed's best qualities — their easy smile, their selfless generosity, their vibrant spirit. It's a coping mechanism. By choosing to focus on and magnify those aspects of someone's personality, we remember people as we want them to be, even when that's not exactly true. No one is a saint, right? But if ever someone came close to sainthood in Burlington, it would have to be Andy Williams.

It's hard to overstate just how remarkable a human being he was, how broad was his reach. It's equally hard to grasp how much he will be missed, how much he gave to our small community and how much better off we see for having known him.

We love you, Andy. Rest in peace. ☺



## Featured Burlington Shows

**SATURDAY 1/10, 8PM**  
**WEAR AND SHAKE**  
\$10 ONLINE, \$12 AT THE DOOR  
"FOURSY FOOT STOMPING ROCK"  
—NEW YORK TIMES

**THURSDAY 1/15, 8PM**  
**TOWN MOUNTAIN**  
\$8 ONLINE, \$10 AT THE DOOR  
"HARD DRIVEY CAROLINA  
STREET DANCE"

Full calendar at  
**skimmypancake.com**  
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15 Main Street, Burlington 262-CHIE  
Burlington Inter school Bx paid

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**Darryl Purpose**

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201 Bridge Street

\$13.50 in advance  
\$20 day of show

802-434-4560  
[www.valleystage.net](http://www.valleystage.net)

## Listening In

A peek at what we're listening to, from the week of January 12th, 2015.

**SHIMMY PANCAKE**, The Light Is Not Just

**SHIMMY PANCAKE**, The Light Is Not Just

**SHIMMY PANCAKE**, The Light Is Not Just

**SHIMMY PANCAKE**, The Light Is Not Just

**SHIMMY PANCAKE**, The Light Is Not Just

**SHIMMY PANCAKE**, The Light Is Not Just

**SHIMMY PANCAKE**, The Light Is Not Just



## The April Verch Band

Fri Jan 17, 7:30 PM

Canada's Ottawa Valley acoustic old-time Appalachian with music fiddling, clogging, string dancing, and great vocals

- Canadian Fiddle Style Workshop Fri Jan 17 3-6 PM
- Canadian Fiddle Style Workshop Sat Jan 17 10-11 AM
- Canadian Fiddle Style Workshop Sat Jan 17 10-11 AM

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by request



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## CLUB DATES

WEDNESDAY JAN 17



LEFT: J. J. SWAN & SHANE (FROM FOLK)

**Now Hear This** Here's our first bold prediction of 2016. If you haven't already heard New York's **SWAN & SHANE**, you will soon. On the back of a starring 2013 record, *Maple Ridge*, and recently supporting genre contemporaries the Lancers and Delta Rae, the band is beginning to make the kinds of apples that often generate waves. Catch them, while you can, at the Slowny Pancake in Burlington this Saturday, January 16.

11-12:30 PM

**NEW SQUARE BLUE ROOM** (Burlington One Project)  
10 p.m. free

### central

**BADTIDE** Andy Pitt (Hawthorne) (American) 8 p.m. (Donations)

**CHRYSLER 6** 5:30 p.m. (Donations) (American) 5 p.m. free

**SHIRLEY PANCAKE** Andy Pitt (Hawthorne) (American) 5 p.m. free

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**SHIRLEY PANCAKE** Andy Pitt (Hawthorne) (American) 5 p.m. free

## FRI.10 burlington area

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## champlain valley

**SHANE** Andy Pitt (Hawthorne) (American) 8 p.m. free

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## SAT.11

### burlington area

**BADTIDE** Andy Pitt (Hawthorne) (American) 8 p.m. free

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[and, yep, still free]

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THE BURLINGTON AREA

ARTS & CULTURE

# REVIEW *this*

## Assable Killings, *Dead Beds*

(SELF-RELEASED DIGITAL DOWNLOAD)

According to Beardslee — and later Roger “Verbs” Kent as The Christ Sages — the greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn’t exist. But after spending time with *Dead Beds*, the latest from Vermont’s Assable Killings, it would submit a slight alteration that *Magthoragheist*’s most demons (those to his ability to manifest to offend forms). Sure, the most famous image of Satan is with red skin, black horns and a pitchfork. That fearsome, demonic visage has been the inspiration for countless artistic tributes, especially of one heavy metal variety. But *Dead Beds* suggests he is at his most dangerous as the Trickster, appearing in ways we’d least expect.

*Assable Killings* is a side project of Telegraph’s Adam Puller and Sean Martin. For fans of that band’s heavy, light-rock leanings, AK may indeed prove too fiery at times. However,

those who fondly remember Martin’s solo metal band, Roman, will find a lot to like. In fact, on a very basic level, AK is something like a hybrid of Roman and Telegraph: black metal heart with blue-eyed soul. The results are suitably disorienting and endlessly entertaining.

The album begins, appropriately enough, with “Xavier’s Gnosis Day” — an ethereal intro that evokes Exiletoxin in the sky and is overlaid with a sample from the film *Wick’s* *Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (“Martha, I have some terrible news...”) Then AK explodes in a crush of deliberate, diabolic guitars and drums. Above this, Martin unleashes a melodic baritone part, eventually yielding to pathos-driven double bass drum assault.

“Devil’s Garden” is next, with Martin adopting the high-tuned shrieks of a chaotic metal singer Puller, who handles all the album’s instrumental duties, surrounded by partners with a gruesome assault of guitars, drums, more film samples and — wait for it — techno-gang bies.

Following the hefty subversion “Signs of the Serpent,” AK offer the record’s gentlest moment, “Die.” Here, AK depict Satan seducing a helpless



girl over a twisted jumble of R&B slow jams, which is a jarring but legitimizing stylistic turn.

“Well, girl, pretty girl,” says Martin in a chunky falsetto style borrowed from Ricki’s “Daters.” “I’ll love you just to do... as at these and die.”

It’s that sort of ghostly, slasher-thick humor, couched in a shifting cloak of musical trickery, that characterizes *Dead Beds*. In Assable Killings’ silo heads — the Devil’s playthings, don’ts know — eternal damnation almost sounds like fun. Which is precisely why it’s so dangerous.

*Dead Beds* by Assable Killings is available at [assablekillings.bandcamp.com](http://assablekillings.bandcamp.com). **C-800**

QAM SOULIES

ASSABLE KILLINGS WITH LEBUS TOUGHEN TO TRACKS



## WDY, *Take You Home*

(SELF-RELEASED DIGITAL DOWNLOAD)

WDY is the pseudonym of local DJ and producer Mike Woodward. For several years, the 30-year-old native has been creating tracks in his St. Albans bedroom, beaming his craft until he finally had something to show the world. *Take You Home*, his 11-track debut LP, is the fruit of those labors. Dense, atmospheric, and rooted in a variety of sounds and styles, Woodward’s freshman outing offers a tantalizing glimpse from a promising young artist that capitulates on his album ticket, yet reveals he’s still got plenty of room to grow.

Woodward claims a wide array of influences, from the electro-pop indie stylings of bands such as MGMT to hip-hop mogul Kanye West to witch house phenom Italian Ash. Flooding elements of each of those artistic styles (let Woodward’s busy soundscapes —



especially *Ash*) but is truest to his integrity and ability. Woodward never seems constrained by how weird, so many young artists often are. Rather, he uses inspiration as a foundation on which to build his own sonic structures — a place only to tear them back down.

*Take You Home* works as something of an open love letter to Woodward’s surroundings. On the album’s first two cuts, “St. Albans” and “Vermont,” he paints atmospheric sonic landscapes, melting stoner electronic beats with almost wordless vocals — the last developed in a swirl of *late ‘90s* that suggest time well spent with recent Justin Vernon records, especially his latest with *Volcano Choir*.

Though the record bears almost no discernible lyrical content, Woodward imparts a sense of isolation and melancholy that should be familiar to anyone who has endured Vermont winters. Even in the album’s more danceable moments, such as the down-tempo “Dreams (Loving)” and the electro slow jam of “The Weekend” — the latter presumably inspired by Canadian artist the Weeknd — Woodward manipulates a chilly atmosphere.

The only fans on *Take You Home* are a few occasionally chirpy cats and one or two pining teenagers. But those minor blips add a certain handmade appeal, a welcome warmth quality amid this tapestry of coolly inorganic sound. And that cuts to the essence of what makes Woodward’s debut so inviting: It has heart.

*Take You Home* by WDY can be streamed at [soundcloud.com/wdy-music](http://soundcloud.com/wdy-music).

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[www.goddard.edu](http://www.goddard.edu)



## SAT. 4/21/11

**BLU. TRIP** Electronic Music Night with Hypnotic Activities. Doors: Electric. 10 p.m. Free.  
**RED SQUARE** & Fly. Activities (free) 10 p.m. \$5. Merchandise (optional). 11 p.m. \$10.  
**RED SQUARE BLUES ROOM** C.J. Ford (solo). 10 p.m. Free. C.J. Ford (solo) (2010). 11 p.m. \$5.  
**ROCK JAMES** Doug Mitchell (solo). 10 p.m. Free.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.  
**VENUE** Saturday Night Hotshots with DJ Oskata & Jon Shalton. 10 p.m. \$10-15.

## central

**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.  
**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.  
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**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.

## champaign valley

**BLU. TRIP** Electronic Music Night with Hypnotic Activities. Doors: Electric. 10 p.m. Free.  
**RED SQUARE** & Fly. Activities (free) 10 p.m. \$5. Merchandise (optional). 11 p.m. \$10.

## northern

**BLU. TRIP** Electronic Music Night with Hypnotic Activities. Doors: Electric. 10 p.m. Free.  
**RED SQUARE** & Fly. Activities (free) 10 p.m. \$5. Merchandise (optional). 11 p.m. \$10.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.

## regional

**HONOLULU** The House (solo). 10 p.m. Free.

## SUN. 12

## burlington area

**BLU. TRIP** Electronic Music Night with Hypnotic Activities. Doors: Electric. 10 p.m. Free.  
**RED SQUARE** & Fly. Activities (free) 10 p.m. \$5. Merchandise (optional). 11 p.m. \$10.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.

## central

**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.  
**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.

## northern

**BLU. TRIP** Electronic Music Night with Hypnotic Activities. Doors: Electric. 10 p.m. Free.

**BLU. TRIP** Electronic Music Night with Hypnotic Activities. Doors: Electric. 10 p.m. Free.  
**RED SQUARE** & Fly. Activities (free) 10 p.m. \$5. Merchandise (optional). 11 p.m. \$10.

## MON. 13

## burlington area

**BLU. TRIP** Electronic Music Night with Hypnotic Activities. Doors: Electric. 10 p.m. Free.  
**RED SQUARE** & Fly. Activities (free) 10 p.m. \$5. Merchandise (optional). 11 p.m. \$10.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.

## central

**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.  
**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.

## northern

**BLU. TRIP** Electronic Music Night with Hypnotic Activities. Doors: Electric. 10 p.m. Free.

## TUE. 14

## burlington area

**BLU. TRIP** Electronic Music Night with Hypnotic Activities. Doors: Electric. 10 p.m. Free.  
**RED SQUARE** & Fly. Activities (free) 10 p.m. \$5. Merchandise (optional). 11 p.m. \$10.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.

## central

**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.  
**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.

## northern

**BLU. TRIP** Electronic Music Night with Hypnotic Activities. Doors: Electric. 10 p.m. Free.

## central

**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.  
**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.

## northern

**BLU. TRIP** Electronic Music Night with Hypnotic Activities. Doors: Electric. 10 p.m. Free.

## WED. 15

## burlington area

**BLU. TRIP** Electronic Music Night with Hypnotic Activities. Doors: Electric. 10 p.m. Free.  
**RED SQUARE** & Fly. Activities (free) 10 p.m. \$5. Merchandise (optional). 11 p.m. \$10.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.



**San Francisco Giant** Chapman-born and California-based, singer-songwriter **PHILIP** both literally and figuratively transcends cultural and artistic boundaries. Blending native Ethiopian legends with Western influences, her music has been likened to that of Aina Mitchell, Tracy Chapman and Erika Eidel. She possesses a rare, vibrant style that inspired her hometown San Francisco Chronicle to call her "an artistic genius in the making." **Melita** plays Artist in the Burlington on Wednesday, January 18.

**HALLOWEEN** Weekend Wednesday with DJ Doug Mitchell (solo). 10 p.m. Free.  
**JP & PUP** Play On (solo). 10 p.m. Free.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.

## central

**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.  
**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.

## northern

**BLU. TRIP** Electronic Music Night with Hypnotic Activities. Doors: Electric. 10 p.m. Free.

## central

**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.  
**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.

**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.  
**SHIRLEY FRANKIE** Sugar & Shute (solo) 10 p.m. \$5.

## central

**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.  
**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.

## northern

**BLU. TRIP** Electronic Music Night with Hypnotic Activities. Doors: Electric. 10 p.m. Free.

## central

**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.  
**RAVISON** Good 2009 (solo). 10 p.m. \$10.



# Double Vision

Johanne Durocher Yordan at Vintage Inspired

**V**erment artist Johanne Durocher Yordan chose an interesting point in her artistic journey to stage her current exhibition. Without looking at the labels of the works as were at Burlington's Vintage Inspired, a viewer could be forgiven for thinking two artists were sharing the show. That's because Yordan's exhibit is bifurcated. On one side of the room we find collage paintings dominated by bold, exuberant poppies painted over layers of torn ephemera, and a few stylized sunflower paintings with subtle, more decorative collage elements. On the opposite wall are abstract paintings in earthier palettes whose compositions follow the logic of linearity.

Artists are not required to stick with one style or medium, of course, and there is no reason to believe that Yordan is not happily navigating forward and backward simultaneously. Both paths are compelling for different reasons, and so are her artworks. In fact, on her website Yordan tells us, "Many of my paintings are well placed while others are incongruous."

But she also writes, "As I continue on in my journey of abstract painting, I find more fascination and freedom to explore and experiment." Yordan's trajectory seems to be toward more abstraction and greater freedom of expression, and this liberation may well cause her to leave flowers and carefully composed collages behind.

Indeed she does, this week's closer look. In this show, Yordan includes eight poppy paintings in sizes from 16 inches square to four feet tall. Regardless of their dimensions, these vermillion or orange flowers do "pop" visually, and their vibrancy is appealing, especially in the dead of winter. While not rigidly realistic, the blossoms are fairly true to form with their ruffled edges and curly stems. The pigment is transparent enough to allow Yordan's backgrounds to peer faintly through. In "Bubbles #8" and "Poppies #7," a pair of smaller 16-by-12-inch works, that backdrop consists of torn pages of poetry, handwritten notes with lacy penmanship, musical scores, postage stamps and the like. These are presumably meaningful to the artist and innocuously arrayed, yet Yordan's surface treatment renders them fleetingly smooth like meticulous production rather than homogenizes the collage, sealing the diverse elements as if in amber. Accordingly, this viewer chose to gloss right over them.

Yordan's paintings featuring poppies and roses are more effective — because



they are visually simpler, and because the contrast is greater between the 18-year face blossoms and the minuscule, pastel geoglyphs. Still, both components are grounded in the earth. There is quite literally a sense of place in these works — particularly in the 48-by-30-inch "On Kona" which employs Vermont maps. The place names are familiar, yet made by their very nature suggest travel to parts unknown. Perhaps to "Across the Lake" (20 by 34 inches), which offers four poppies and fragmented maps of opposite North York.

By contrast, Yordan's abstract paintings are usually devoid of regionalist content; they owe their cohesion — if sometimes just barely — to the grid. Like the collages, these works are layered, but here the strata consist of base, point over point and textures created by impasto, but of more mesh adhesion and more buried within the paint, a variety of brushstrokes and tactile techniques, and gestures.

It's not evident in what order Yordan painted these pieces, but some are more successful than others. The 34-by-18-inch

"Second Chance" may have a significant title, but the painting itself is rather angular. The primary color is a thin brown, most visible in places by white, a lagoon of pale green emerges in the center, and a succession of white, brassy blobs bursts the composition horizontally just before the middle. In addition, unsatisfiable lumps in a variety of shapes have been affixed to the canvas and painted over, thick, overly drastic of paint prompts still more texture. The work is a definite departure from elegant flora, but it tries

two hard.

Yordan moves in a more promising direction with "Dimension" — whose dominant color is sage green, with elements of black, white and mustard gold — and with two companions titled "Abstract Dimensions" (#1 and #2), which play with brown, gold and rose. In each of these the artist explores the interplay of vertical and horizontal, mostly using wide, roughly brushed strokes and blocks, layering and cutting into the paint. No new or historical ground is broken here, but Yordan's experientialism underlines.

"Chaos," aptly named, goes the farthest in mirroring the integrity of the grid. In fact, the painting appears to be disintegrating, which gives it a surreal sense of the war works back. Yordan has built an intricate structure of chocolate-brown blocks — an implied wall, perhaps, with some of the "brick" missing. Broad vertical strokes of white paint run down on this structure, softening the edges of the blocks. Collage seems imminent. These short-life strokes begin near but not quite at the top of the painting, an effectively smothering choice. Behind the white curtains is a wall of ache, bleached by soap drops of brown. The canvas is shrouded in shadow, their slightly curving lines shooting downward as if from an explosion.

Despite the limited palette, this painting commands attention, and Yordan's intuitive embrace of "Chaos" is an exciting development.

PAMELA PELSTON

## INFO

Johanne Durocher Yordan: paintings and collage at Vintage Inspired in Burlington through January 31, 2011, [www.vintageinspired.com](http://www.vintageinspired.com)

**A VIEWER COULD BE FORGIVEN FOR THINKING TWO ARTISTS WERE SHARING THE SHOW.**





BURLINGTON AREA MUSEUMS &amp; VENUES

## central

**WALL: HOME DIFFER GARDEN** With elegant, glowing, gently undulating lines, the exhibit examines religious art inspired by Hindu gods and their sacred landscapes and what that history of art, in various styles, illustrates. Through January 12th through December 21st at Bulfinch Museum in Lecture Center, Harvard University at North Street, info: 855-2553

**RUBENGT THAKSANG** Buddhist monks in various settings from his past and today are the subjects of the new art. Through January 21st. Yale The School in Manhattan, info: 855-2553

**EARTH'S PRIDE: REMOTE OCEANOGRAPHY** **RESEARCHING AWARENESS** Artists in that exhibition the Earth's beautiful while reflecting on humans between mankind and the environment. Through April 2nd. The Museum of Art, 1001 Spring Street and Richard Street. Through April 2nd at Great Hall in Springfield, info: 338-3333

**HOLIDAY SHOW** Small works by 100 artists in a new art gallery opening. Through January 21st at The Museum of Art, 1001 Spring Street, info: 338-3333

**INTERPRETING THE UNIDENTIFIED** Complex photographs from 1945 and are later between 1948 and 1950 the Landscape Change Program at the University of the West's research of the landscape, which aims to help understand the creation of the landscape. Through January 21st at the Vermont History Museum in Montpelier, info: 475-5559

**JANE PAUL WINTER SHOW** The annual exhibit members, there for an exhibition by Virginia Smith and Louis Muffin. Through January 21st at the Vermont Museum of Art, 1001 Spring Street, info: 338-3333

**JANEY FREEDBERG: Quiet Observations** Artists' works at a new art gallery opening. Through January 21st at the Vermont Museum of Art, 1001 Spring Street, info: 338-3333

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## champlain valley

**CONFIDENTIAL PICTURES** A mixed media installation by artist (born in 1945) at the Champlain Valley Museum of Art, 1001 Spring Street, info: 338-3333

**NEW LINE NEW ENGLAND** A mixed media installation by artist (born in 1945) at the Champlain Valley Museum of Art, 1001 Spring Street, info: 338-3333

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## Kate Gridley

In an era when selfies are arguably the most common image of young people, it's unusual to see paintings of a honest adult — never mind life-size portraits. Because, you know, they take a long time to create. Vermont artist Kate Gridley de la Cruz is no exception in her series titled "Passing Through: Portraits of Raging Adults." She's been touring the large-scale works — in oil, acrylic, richly painted figures against stark white backdrops — around Vermont and this week brings them to the Amy K. Thorne Gallery at the Flynn Center in Burlington. Her 17 subjects represent a range of beliefs, sexual identities, socioeconomic statuses, health issues and life experiences, but what they all have in common is their stage of life: "Passing Through" marks moments in which emerging adults transition to nothing their selves and claim their voices," Gridley writes on her website. The exhibit opens with a reception on Friday, January 10, at 5:30 p.m., and will be on view through April 12.

## Tom Berriman

Berriman's artwork is for the birds. So passionate about avian photography is he that he employs a technique called "disappearing" shooting through a camera attached to a spotting scope. That's helped him to take strikingly up-close-and-personal shots of feathered friends all around the wildlife refuge and manage most areas in northern Vermont. As a board member of Northeast Kingdom Audubon, Berriman leads frequent birding trips throughout the year, and he is a Fellow and staffer at St. Johnsbury's Faithfuls Museum, as well. All this knowledge and experience has behind his exhibit of bird photographs on view at the Vermont Institute of Natural Science in Quechee through March 31. A percentage of sales of his images will support VINY's educational, conservation and avian rehabilitation programs. Pictured: a common ruppel.





**Kelly Holt** For her mixed-media paintings in an exhibit at River Arts in Montserrat titled "Where," Vermont artist Kelly Holt says she drew inspiration from Paul Gauguin's painting "Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?" That 1897 oil, created in Tahiti, extensively represents the stages of life. If symbolic, Gauguin's painting a figurative, which radically distinguishes it from Holt's abstractions. Looking at them, viewers might not guess that she is "addressing how turbulence changes direction in a planned path." But who cares? Whatever we see in her layered surfaces of acrylic, oil, graphite, pencil and patches of loose paper, the looking is a most engaging visual journey. The exhibit opens with a reception Thursday, January 9, 5-7 p.m., and extends in March 9. Petrol. "Dancing Benedict."

**BERT SHAIN** Color photographs taken in Montserrat, Ontario and Kentucky. Through January 26 at City of Gloucester & Saratoga. Info: 518-452-3053

**ALICE AND BLAKE HARRISON'S WISDOM AND LEGACY** An exhibit celebrating the legacies of the artist, artist and educator along with the artist's work. Through October 23 at Vermont Art and Design Museum in St. Albans. Info: 253-2272

**SUNRISE** Sunrise and other recent paintings, photographs, sculptures and video by artist from Vermont artist. Through January 26 at Vermont Art and Design Museum in St. Albans. Info: 253-2272

**TRINE WILSON AND SCOTT WILSON** Photography and sculpture and artwork by Trine Wilson. Through January 26 at Vermont Public Library. Info: 253-2272

#### ARTISTS

**ARTIST RESIDENCY** For people living, working and artist residencies in the world. Info: 253-2272

have used to describe working in the dark from space. Through February 26 at Burlington Museum & Art Center in Burlington. Info: 253-2272

**DAVID FIELD** Ceramic sculpture. Work by the Vermont artist. Through March 23 at Burlington Museum & Art Center. Info: 253-2272

#### ARTISTS

**JULIA DE LAUNCEY** A portrait of a portrait of a portrait of a portrait of the French American portrait artist. Through March 23 at Burlington Museum & Art Center. Info: 253-2272

**SPRINGING A VERMONT ART AND MUSIC FROM THE BURLINGTON TO BURLINGTON** An exhibit featuring Vermont artists and musicians. Through January 26 at Burlington Museum & Art Center. Info: 253-2272

**STUDIO SELECTIONS** Work by Vermont artists in various media. Through January 26 at Burlington Museum & Art Center. Info: 253-2272

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AMERICAN HUSTLE

## NEW IN THEATERS

**AMERICAN HUSTLE** (PG-13) Amy Adams stars in this writer's pick about a scandalous tale of romance, greed, and power. Her husband (Brad Pitt) is a con man who seduces her into a life of crime. (120 min, R)

**THE MONUMENTS MEN** (PG) In this comedy, a group of soldiers who find the remains of the World War II soldiers in the desert. (100 min, R)

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## ratings

- ★ = instant classic
- ★★ = deserves to be seen, but not right now
- ★★★ = fun, but not essential
- ★★★★ = similar to the average best
- ★★★★★ = as good as it gets

BASED ON THE 2014 ROLLING STONE CRITIC'S CHOICE AWARDS. ALL RATES ARE BASED ON THE 2014 ROLLING STONE CRITIC'S CHOICE AWARDS. ALL RATES ARE BASED ON THE 2014 ROLLING STONE CRITIC'S CHOICE AWARDS.

## NOW PLAYING

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# 246

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*The Devil Inside* 8  
*The Devil Inside* 8  
*The Devil Inside* 8  
*The Devil Inside* 8

**Friday 10** — *Thursday 11*  
*American Heist* 10 3:30 5:30 Sat 10  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 10 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

## BLUJO CINEMA 4

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**wednesday 8** — *Thursday 9*  
*Archerdome* 8  
*The Legend of Hercules* 8  
*The Legend of Hercules* 8  
*The Legend of Hercules* 8

**Friday 10** — *Thursday 11*  
*American Heist* 10 3:30 5:30 Sat 10  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 10 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Saturday 12** — *Friday 13*  
*American Heist* 12 3:30 5:30 Sat 12  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 12 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Sunday 14** — *Friday 15*  
*American Heist* 14 3:30 5:30 Sat 14  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 14 3:30 5:30  
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## CAPITOL SHOWPLACE

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**wednesday 8** — *Thursday 9*  
*Archerdome* 8  
*The Legend of Hercules* 8  
*The Legend of Hercules* 8  
*The Legend of Hercules* 8

**Friday 10** — *Thursday 11*  
*American Heist* 10 3:30 5:30 Sat 10  
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**Saturday 12** — *Friday 13*  
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*The Legend of Hercules* 12 3:30 5:30  
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**Sunday 14** — *Friday 15*  
*American Heist* 14 3:30 5:30 Sat 14  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 14 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

## ESSEX CINEMAS & THEATRE

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**wednesday 8** — *Thursday 9*  
*Archerdome* 8  
*The Legend of Hercules* 8  
*The Legend of Hercules* 8  
*The Legend of Hercules* 8

**Friday 10** — *Thursday 11*  
*American Heist* 10 3:30 5:30 Sat 10  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 10 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Saturday 12** — *Friday 13*  
*American Heist* 12 3:30 5:30 Sat 12  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 12 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

## MARQUIS THEATRE

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**wednesday 8** — *Thursday 9*  
*Archerdome* 8  
*The Legend of Hercules* 8  
*The Legend of Hercules* 8  
*The Legend of Hercules* 8

**Friday 10** — *Thursday 11*  
*American Heist* 10 3:30 5:30 Sat 10  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 10 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Saturday 12** — *Friday 13*  
*American Heist* 12 3:30 5:30 Sat 12  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 12 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Sunday 14** — *Friday 15*  
*American Heist* 14 3:30 5:30 Sat 14  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 14 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Monday 16** — *Friday 17*  
*American Heist* 16 3:30 5:30 Sat 16  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 16 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Tuesday 18** — *Friday 19*  
*American Heist* 18 3:30 5:30 Sat 18  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 18 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Wednesday 20** — *Friday 21*  
*American Heist* 20 3:30 5:30 Sat 20  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 20 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Thursday 22** — *Friday 23*  
*American Heist* 22 3:30 5:30 Sat 22  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 22 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Friday 24** — *Friday 25*  
*American Heist* 24 3:30 5:30 Sat 24  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 24 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Saturday 26** — *Friday 27*  
*American Heist* 26 3:30 5:30 Sat 26  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 26 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Sunday 28** — *Friday 29*  
*American Heist* 28 3:30 5:30 Sat 28  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 28 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Monday 30** — *Friday 31*  
*American Heist* 30 3:30 5:30 Sat 30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 30 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Tuesday 1** — *Friday 2*  
*American Heist* 1 3:30 5:30 Sat 1  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 1 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Wednesday 3** — *Friday 4*  
*American Heist* 3 3:30 5:30 Sat 3  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 3 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Thursday 5** — *Friday 6*  
*American Heist* 5 3:30 5:30 Sat 5  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 5 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Friday 7** — *Friday 8*  
*American Heist* 7 3:30 5:30 Sat 7  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 7 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Saturday 9** — *Friday 10*  
*American Heist* 9 3:30 5:30 Sat 9  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 9 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Sunday 11** — *Friday 12*  
*American Heist* 11 3:30 5:30 Sat 11  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 11 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Monday 13** — *Friday 14*  
*American Heist* 13 3:30 5:30 Sat 13  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 13 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Tuesday 15** — *Friday 16*  
*American Heist* 15 3:30 5:30 Sat 15  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 15 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Wednesday 17** — *Friday 18*  
*American Heist* 17 3:30 5:30 Sat 17  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 17 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Thursday 19** — *Friday 20*  
*American Heist* 19 3:30 5:30 Sat 19  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 19 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Friday 21** — *Friday 22*  
*American Heist* 21 3:30 5:30 Sat 21  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 21 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Saturday 23** — *Friday 24*  
*American Heist* 23 3:30 5:30 Sat 23  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 23 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Sunday 25** — *Friday 26*  
*American Heist* 25 3:30 5:30 Sat 25  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 25 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Monday 27** — *Friday 28*  
*American Heist* 27 3:30 5:30 Sat 27  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 27 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Tuesday 29** — *Friday 30*  
*American Heist* 29 3:30 5:30 Sat 29  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 29 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Wednesday 31** — *Friday 1*  
*American Heist* 31 3:30 5:30 Sat 31  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 31 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Thursday 2** — *Friday 3*  
*American Heist* 2 3:30 5:30 Sat 2  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 2 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Friday 4** — *Friday 5*  
*American Heist* 4 3:30 5:30 Sat 4  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 4 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Saturday 6** — *Friday 7*  
*American Heist* 6 3:30 5:30 Sat 6  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 6 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Sunday 8** — *Friday 9*  
*American Heist* 8 3:30 5:30 Sat 8  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 8 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Monday 10** — *Friday 11*  
*American Heist* 10 3:30 5:30 Sat 10  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 10 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Tuesday 12** — *Friday 13*  
*American Heist* 12 3:30 5:30 Sat 12  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 12 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Wednesday 14** — *Friday 15*  
*American Heist* 14 3:30 5:30 Sat 14  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 14 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Thursday 16** — *Friday 17*  
*American Heist* 16 3:30 5:30 Sat 16  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 16 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Friday 18** — *Friday 19*  
*American Heist* 18 3:30 5:30 Sat 18  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 18 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Saturday 20** — *Friday 21*  
*American Heist* 20 3:30 5:30 Sat 20  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 20 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Sunday 22** — *Friday 23*  
*American Heist* 22 3:30 5:30 Sat 22  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 22 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Monday 24** — *Friday 25*  
*American Heist* 24 3:30 5:30 Sat 24  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 24 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Tuesday 26** — *Friday 27*  
*American Heist* 26 3:30 5:30 Sat 26  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 26 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Wednesday 28** — *Friday 29*  
*American Heist* 28 3:30 5:30 Sat 28  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 28 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Thursday 30** — *Friday 31*  
*American Heist* 30 3:30 5:30 Sat 30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 30 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Friday 1** — *Friday 2*  
*American Heist* 1 3:30 5:30 Sat 1  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 1 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Saturday 3** — *Friday 4*  
*American Heist* 3 3:30 5:30 Sat 3  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 3 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Sunday 5** — *Friday 6*  
*American Heist* 5 3:30 5:30 Sat 5  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 5 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Monday 7** — *Friday 8*  
*American Heist* 7 3:30 5:30 Sat 7  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 7 3:30 5:30  
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**Tuesday 9** — *Friday 10*  
*American Heist* 9 3:30 5:30 Sat 9  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
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1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Monday 21** — *Friday 22*  
*American Heist* 21 3:30 5:30 Sat 21  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30  
*The Legend of Hercules* 21 3:30 5:30  
1:30 3:30 5:30 Sun 1:30 3:30 5:30

**Tuesday 23** — *Friday 24*  
*American Heist* 23 3:30 5:30 Sat 23  
1:30 3



# fun stuff

**MORE FUN!** STRAIGHT DOPE (P.22) CROSSWORD (P.C. 5) & CALENDAR & SUDOKU (P.C. 7)

EDIE EVERETTE



DAKOTA MCFADZEAN



LULU EIGHTBALL



JEN SORENSEN



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**Curses, Follies Again**

Tray Foster Mitchell, 47, was in the process of robbing a bank in Modesto, Calif., when another caller called out, "Hi, Tray!" The caller recognized Mitchell because he'd been in the bank a month earlier to apply for a car loan. After Mitchell made off with \$5,000, bank officials shared Mitch's application form to police, who arrested him at the address he'd given. "Most people make more of an effort to hide, we're in a mode or have a getaway vehicle," Lauren Sherwood of the U.S. Attorney's Office said, "but he had nothing" (Modesto's the Record).

**Star Quality**

An Indian merchant named Chandrashekar posted a billboard in Tamil Nadu intending to honor the late Nelson Mandela. The sign showed a photo of actor Morgan Freeman instead of one of the South African leader. Freeman portrayed Mandela in the 2009 film *Invisible Man*. The merchant blamed the mistake on the billboard's designer. (Agence France Press)

**Flush with Wealth**

Wealthier than a Jet Airways aircraft at Kolkata, India, found 240 gold bars worth more than \$840,000 that had been left in the laundry. Regional authorities disclosed that cleaning crews have made "scores" of similar discoveries, which are connected to smuggling operations. A passenger carries the gold aboard an international flight bound for India, hides it in the lavatory and leaves it there when exiting the plane to clear customs. The aircraft still contains an in-flight flight attendant. A new passenger retrieves the gold and turns it all the place because customs officers don't check in-flight flights. (British Daily Mail)

## MEDICAL RESEARCHERS HAVE DEVELOPED A ROBOT BUTT.

**Cage Batters of the Week**

The Nonsensical Right: Project filed four lawsuits asking a New York state court to establish the "legal person-hood" of chimpanzees and afford them basic rights not to be held captive for entertainment or research. Chimpanzees "possess complex cognitive abilities that are so strongly protected when they're found in human beings," Steven Wise, president of the nonprofit declared. "There's no reason why they should not be protected when they're found in chimpanzees." (Reuters)

**Annals of Medicine**

Medical researchers have developed a robot butt. The device is designed to train prostate doctors in prostate exams, according to its inventors, Drs. Benjamin Loh and Carlo Pugh. The plastic proctator is hooked up to a video screen featuring a virtual male named "Patrick" who is bent over a desk. "The mannequin is interconnected with three sensors that can measure when the student is examining and with how much pressure," Loh said, adding that Patrick even measures eye contact between the student and the virtual patient to help improve bedside manner. (The Huffington Post)

**Litigation Nation**

A citizens group is suing the city of La Jolla, Calif., demanding that it eradicate the "toil, troubles and dilemmas" left by birds and sea lions defecating on the rocks below restaurants overlooking scenic La Jolla Cove. Citizens for Ocean Nourishment blames the foul smell on city officials, who two years ago approved a plan to keep people away from the rocks. Since then, birds and marine mammals have flocked to the site. The lawsuit complains that sea lions particularly have made the problem "much worse" because they're eating strong-smelling anchovies on the rocks. Removing the fence, the lawsuit contends, would let people cluster on the rocks and,

by doing so, chase away the birds and mammals to defecate elsewhere. (Los Angeles Times)

**Waste of Taste**

The chief course of food waste in the United Kingdom is food wrappers, according to the supermarket chain Tesco. Officials reported that in the first six months of 2013, the U.K. stores threw away 30,000 tons of edible food that customers rejected because they "always pick the cream of the crop" and turn down old or mishapen produce, regardless of whether taste is affected. "Customers will always make the choice of the one that cosmetically looks better," Matt Semmner, Tesco's food sourcing director, told a House of Lords panel. "That's a very difficult reality for us." By contrast, Semmner noted, Eastern European countries more willingly accept less-than-perfect-looking food. (Reuters Daily Mail)

**Least We Forget**

After movie star Paul Walker died in a car crash, Scottish authorities reported that a car burst into flames during a gathering to honor Walker organized by a group of car enthusiasts. Police charged a 39-year-old man with causing the fire, which began "after removing the engine for 10 minutes in tribute" (Scotland's STV).

**BLISS** BY HARRY BLISS**TED RALL**

# RED MEAT

Isaiah's landing strip

from the secret files of  
MAX CANNON

I can't believe it. I had no idea you were  
down again last night for the third time



Maybe it's genetic sign of it earlier? Yes



Just. I am hope so. I could use the same  
good therapy to get off these bar stools  
at the end of my undersea bottle bottles.



# THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

## Ask Mister Republican Man!



Dear Mister Republican Man: My  
love is not true. I'm sorry, but I  
don't want to be married to you. I  
want to be married to a woman who  
can stand up for herself without  
getting fired! —Stanley in Hartford

ED SUGGEST YOU PUT YOUR VERY  
WHOLESALE ORDERS ASIDE AND  
FOCUS ON WHY REALLY AFTER—  
THE BENEFIT! (SARCASTIC)

IT'S NOT YOUR  
INTEREST,  
YOU KNOW!



Dear Mister Republican Man: My  
love is not true. I'm sorry, but I  
don't want to be married to you. I  
want to be married to a woman who  
can stand up for herself without  
getting fired! —Stanley in Hartford

IS YOUR FATHER A DEMOCRAT?  
WE COULD BE TRYING TO DIS-  
FRANCHISE YOU! —MOM, BENGAL!

HAVE YOU HELP  
A NEW PEOPLE.



Dear Mister Republican Man: My  
love is not true. I'm sorry, but I  
don't want to be married to you. I  
want to be married to a woman who  
can stand up for herself without  
getting fired! —Stanley in Hartford

I THINK IT'S MORE LIKELY THAT  
HE'S MISPLACED BY THE MEDIA  
AND NOT A REALITY SHOW HOST  
BENGAL!

AS YOU SHOULD BE  
AS WELL.



Dear Mister Republican Man: My  
love is not true. I'm sorry, but I  
don't want to be married to you. I  
want to be married to a woman who  
can stand up for herself without  
getting fired! —Stanley in Hartford

IF YOU WERE TO WHORE ABOUT—  
AS LONG AS YOU'RE READING UP ON  
BENGAL!

YOUR COUNTRY IS ENTIRELY  
NATURAL AT HIS AGE!



Dear Mister Republican Man: My  
love is not true. I'm sorry, but I  
don't want to be married to you. I  
want to be married to a woman who  
can stand up for herself without  
getting fired! —Stanley in Hartford

WHY ON ANYTHING? YOU SHOULD  
FOURTEEN WELL-MADE TO ME!

I ONLY WAS  
HERE FOR YOU!



# GLOKIAN WARRIOR

A COMIC STRIP BY  
JAMES KOCHAKA  
(ARTIST AND WRITER OF GLOKIAN)  
www.glokiawarrior.com @dod



THE END



## Capricorn

[Jan. 23 to Jan. 19]

Can you guess what combination of colors makes the most vivid vibrant impact? Psychologists say it's black on yellow. Together they attract the eye. They command attention. They activate a readiness to respond. According to my reading of the astrological zodiac, this is the effect you can and should have in the coming weeks. It's time for you to draw the best kind of attention to yourself. You have a right and a duty to galvanize people with the power of your presence. Whether you actually wear yellow clothes with black highlights is optional as long as you cultivate a similar potency.

Talking about scientific tests and tests that take place in a laboratory. I'm referring to you... or when you integrate a change in your routine to attract unpredictable changes into your sphere. Now would be an excellent time to expose yourself to a new world of ideas that, sooner would have your eyes opened, your minds stretched and your mind blown.

**GEMINI** [May 21-June 20] To help take the edge off the stresses you have been wrestling with I offer you these lines from a poem by Kay Ryan: "The day important / I the less imagined / I got inside it / the least of adaptation / Nothing is strange / from this-ness!" In other words Gemini, whatever has happened through your life will probably return later in a new form. The wrong turns you make may lead you to a more passively to find what you want? Or would you prefer that the best things stay late, the dead things stay dead? Make a choice now.

**CANCER** [June 21-July 20] "Human beings are often unable to receive because we do not know what to ask for," says the writer Maurice Sendak in his book *Where the Wild Things Are*. We sometimes refuse to get what we subconscious we do not know what we want. With that in mind, Cancer, hear my two pence. First, that in the next six weeks, you will work diligently to identify the garden you want, mind, and second, that you will cultivate your capacity to receive the garden you want most by refining your skill in asking for them.

**LEO** [July 23-Aug. 22] Julia Margen [1919-2012] said the first woman borned as an architect in California. She designed over 700 buildings in the course of her brilliant career and thrived both financially and artistically. One key to her success was her humility. "Don't ever turn down a job because it's beneath you," she advised. That's a helpful message for you to hear too. If you're to the work-related opportunities you may be invited to take on, as well as other tasks that your friends, associates and loved ones ask you to consider. You can't possibly have enough to time how important it might ultimately be to

**CLICK ON THE NEW FREEDOM EXPANDED REPLY**

apply yourself conscientiously to a seemingly small assignment.

**VIRGO** [Aug. 23-Sept. 22] One of Goethe's music teachers said: "As a composer he is hopeless." When Thomas Mann was a kid, a teacher told him he was "too stupid to learn anything." And, Shostakovich said of a newspaper when he was young, but his talent grew from there. The lesson? Anguish, pain and fear do good things. I am sure there was a personality that in your past — someone who annoyed and discouraged you, but his happy impact that 2014 will be the best year ever for rebuilding and overcoming. Just remember, come. If you have not yet purchased your holy grail, begin now.

**LIBRA** [Sept. 23-Oct. 22] As a child, French philosopher and writer, Gilles Deleuze (1925-1992) loved music, but his father, and home-schooled his, forced him to forgo mathematics in studying the sciences. Deleuze rebelled. When he was 12 years old he locked himself in his room for days and immersed himself in mathematical axioms. When he emerged, he told figures out on his own some of Euclid's fundamental theorems about geometry. Eventually, he became a social mathematician. I see the coming weeks as prime time to do something like the young Deleuze did. Don't yourself away from other people's opinions about who you're supposed to be and explore the themes that will be crucial for the person you are becoming.

**SCORPIO** [Oct. 23-Nov. 21] In 1609 Dutch sea explorer Henry Hudson sailed to America and back then it was a barren spot of low-lying marsh and swamps and no riches. But it was eventually turned into a bustling metropolis — an "astrological playground" according to the documentary film *Coney Island*. By the early 20th century there were three spinning amusement parks packed into its six square miles of land plus a forest of gambling electric towers, racetracks, casinos, movie houses, vaudeville pits to the moon, the largest herd of elephants in the world, and panoramas showing the Creation, the End of the World and Hell. I mention this, Scorpio, because 2014 could inspire your very own

Henry Hudson adventure. A time when you will discover virgin territory that will ultimately become an astrological playground.

**SAGITTARIUS** [Nov. 23-Dec. 21] When bad things and back pack problems lead to them, would be clever enough to be clever. So, Sagittarius, when Henry Hudson teaches that might be an accurate statement for most people, but I don't think it will be true for you. Sagittarius, in the future, your natural intelligence will be working even better than your. Your intellectual inklings are likely to serve as reliable guides to what action. Trust what your body tells you. You will definitely be clever enough to be clever.

**AQUARIUS** [Jan. 20-Feb. 18] I'm going to give you a metaphorical sense, please, been swallowed by a whale. Now you're riding your time in the bowels of life. Here's my prediction: You will be like the blind men, who underwent a more literal version of your experience. The whale eventually expelled him, allowing him to return to his life and be saved — and your story will have the same outcome. What should you do in the meantime? Here's the advice that Don Quixote gives to Sancho Panza in his *Don Quixote*. Find the evidence of those before you. Listen for the sound of your heart, be thankful that you see, and walk carefully with all things where you can rest, eat well.

**PISCES** [Feb. 19-March 20] How do you like your tests? Short, intense and chaotic? Or, usually, drawn out and low-pressure? Here's another question: Do you prefer to pick out the best you later making sure they're good fits for the project before you want to finish it? Or do you, let it mean making and experimenting to test how something, when unpredictable tests put your way? Remember about these matters: Pick your cues for a next big test sometime soon, unless in your interest to keep going and define how everything unfolds.

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WINE & CIDER \$1.50

BEER \$1.50

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**MUSTACHE**

**2.09.14**

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Some resolutions are  
harder to keep than others.

